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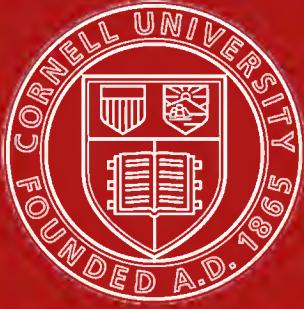
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The University Press Shakespeare

THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE
IN FORTY VOLUMES

Editor's Autograph Edition

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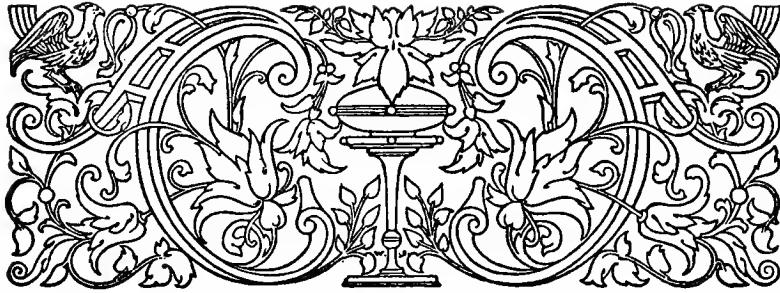
SONNETS

F. BRANGWYN



*“OUR love was new, and then but in the spring,
When I was wont to greet it with my lays.”*

SONNET CH.



THE COMPLETE WORKS OF
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

WITH ANNOTATIONS AND
A GENERAL INTRODUCTION
BY SIDNEY LEE

VOLUME XXXVIII

SONNETS

WITH A SPECIAL INTRODUCTION BY JOHN DAVIDSON
AND AN ORIGINAL FRONTISPIECE BY F. BRANGWYN



NEW YORK GEORGE D. SPROUL MCMIX

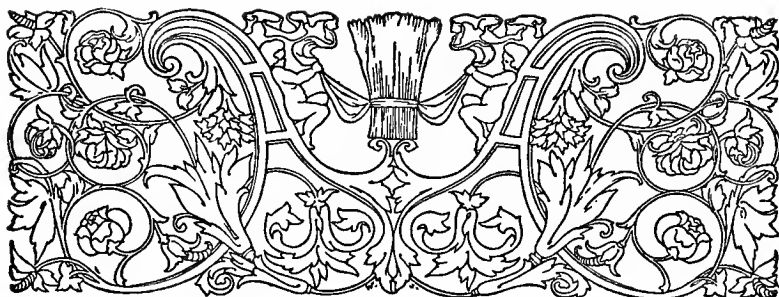
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INTRODUCTION



AN author always composes his autobiography, more or less fully, according to the nature and extent of his writings; because whatsoever a man writes is autobiographic. Thus the sincerity of an author's personal utterance undergoes an immediate and infallible test: it is confronted with the witness of his works. Confessions, reminiscences, biographies and autobiographies of authors must all answer the exhaustive cross-examination of every paragraph or character they have written or created. The man is in his books, and if the biographic or autobiographic matter is not measurably a synoptical index to them, the trial of truth between the two puts the one or the other out of court. Where shall we look for a man's life if not in his works? Napoleon will be found in his campaigns, battles, code;

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Shakespeare, in his plays and poems. It is extraordinary how Englishmen, cultured and uncultured, have clung to the idea, to the hope that Shakespeare is not to be found in his works. Probably they have hugged this illusion to their hearts because they beheld in moments of honesty behind the veil of the dramas and sonnets something—very unlike themselves. Shakespeare—it was Emerson who gave the saying currency—is the most truly known of all English men of letters; he and his work are one indissolubly. The true Samuel Johnson we shall never know. The creative artist, Boswell, has made a palimpsest of the lexicographer's works, writing, as it were, the illuminated life of a saint on the rough hide of Behemoth. The true Carlyle it may be difficult to recover. Froude has scored across the works of the most chivalrous figure among English prosemen, Don Quixote, sane and a prophet, the unworthy story of a soured Sancho Panza. But it is impossible not to know Shakespeare as far as man can know him. No biography by some dazzled or envious contemporary exists to mislead us. The plays, the poems, the sonnets—the style is here the man without alloy; and in the sonnets we come nearest to him. These are the personal utterances of him who made Hamlet and Parolles, and the multitude between; of the man who found the world an empty nut, and in it placed a kernel which human intelligence has not yet devoured and digested.

The æsthetic value of Shakespeare's sonnets is commensurate with their autobiographic truth. This does not imply any sullen reflection on Shakespeare's char-

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acter. An unworthy spirit of criticism has long been puzzling over the matter and asserting more loudly than its warrant that there is a hateful revelation in the sonnets. Parolles seems to say to Hamlet, "It is I who am Shakespeare, not you. As I exclaimed three hundred years ago,

'Who knows himself a braggart
Let him fear this; for it will come to pass
That every braggart shall be found an ass.'

I have come into my own, my lord. Hitherto Shakespearean has meant simply Hamletian. The good-natured world — for the actual world is at the best and in the gross exceedingly thoughtless and agreeable — I say, my lord, the good-natured world, highly flattered at its supposed reflection, dressed its mind in the magic mirror of Hamlet, and fancied itself Shakespearean. But Hamlet and Prospero are only the vanity of Shakespeare; I, Parolles, am the true Shakespeare; and I can prove it. I am the true Shakespeare; because, with the exception of the nurse in 'Romeo and Juliet,' who is liker Shakespeare than any other of his creations saving myself, I am the only really live character in all his plays. Falstaff, Richard, Juliet, Iago, Nym, yourself, my lord Hamlet, are merely fairies, good, bad, or indifferent. I do not mean that Shakespeare intended me for himself: I am the sub-consciousness, the inmost fibre of the man — the Judas of very self, which every artist, unbeknown, creates for his own betrayal. This men begin to recognize; and the moment they are fully aware of the self-

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deception of their Hamleto-Shakespeareanism, the empire of Shakespeare is destroyed, and the world becomes once more an empty nut; except that I remain, the self-pilloried monster, the Judas-Shakespeare who cozened the foolish world for three hundred years. Oh! there is no question of it! That I am Shakespeare is made apparent to any awakened intelligence by the fact that what was subconscious as Parolles becomes conscious as a palliated, a self-excused characteristic of the loquacious, casual Hamlet—the mirror, the false, the magic mirror which Shakespeare held up to nature. But my main proof, my impregnable rock, is the book of sonnets: they are the evidence in chief for my identity with Shakespeare. In them I have written myself down infamous in the last degree; the hack and slave of Southampton and Pembroke; the go-between for courtiers and their mistresses: a fatuous fool; a debased sensualist, a . . . ” Here the look in Hamlet’s eyes would arrest the noisy ape; and Hamlet himself would probably reply: “Understand, Parolles, that Shakespeare was greater than either you or I; that you, by many degrees inferior to the average sensual man, are less alive than almost any other character Shakespeare portrayed, lacking as you do both conscience and imagination. Beside you Pistol is beautiful and Bardolf sweet. What have we to do with the faults of Shakespeare? Who is there at all that shall judge him? It is law all the world over that men must be judged by their peers. Where are those who may sit with Shakespeare? Dante, Goethe, Hugo, Ibsen are parochial beside him. Cæsar, Charlemagne, Cromwell,

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Napoleon are of a different order. I myself am likest Shakespeare of all the beings he made. Those tables on which I scribbled against the wall of Elsinore, that one may smile and smile and be a villain, are perhaps the very tables on which Shakespeare wrote his sonnets. So extraordinary a being would keep an extraordinary commonplace book. His sonnets are memoranda written principally for himself, and although some of the matter is re-produced in the plays, the meaning of much of it can only be guessed at. Why may not the persons of the sonnets be the symbols of a poetic shorthand of which the key perished with Shakespeare himself? Never in any case read into the sonnets a loathsome meaning. Neither for purposes of botanical study, nor for the satisfaction of the senses of sight or smell, is it helpful to daub a flower with the manure out of which it grew."

Why did Shakespeare choose this form for a personal utterance? It was hardly a choice. The sonnet, a poetic artifice of high quality, which obtained a lasting vogue from its noble employment by Petrarch, degenerated during the sixteenth century into a species of *vers de société* and ravaged the literature of Europe like a plague. It was not a mere malady of form. There was no sonnet peculiar to each nation. The poets of Italy, France, and England all wrote the same European sonnet, taking, it might almost be said, a greater formal than material license. Character, intellect, genius were powerless against the disease. Michael Angelo, the greatest and most various force in art, and William

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Shakespeare, the one miraculous, undefinable intelligence, of the modern world, could not escape it. In the sinewy intellect, the concentrated personality, the engrained health and deep religious mood of Michael Angelo this malady of the sonnet was transmuted at once into an expression of spiritual passion; whereas in the limitless soul of Shakespeare it had ample scope to be itself as well as the personal utterance of the master-poet. Risking the contagion in an experimental essay or two, Shakespeare found himself with a fever in the brain fated to run its intermittent course; for this passing inoculation of the fancy, as it doubtless seemed to him at first, entered into the very marrow of his existence and issued in poetry that sighs in the ear of Time forever the anguish of the soul of Shakespeare, like the tidal sighing of the ocean stretched on "the rack of this tough world."

Platonic friendship, the adulation of a patron, a sexual passion and the pleasures and pains, the praise and blame of love, with illustrations from the shows of Nature, the seasons of the year, and a toyshop of conceits were the warp and woof of the fashionable, seductive sonnet of Europe. But as Shakespeare was Shakespeare, loved his patron and suffered an actual passion for his mistress, all these common characteristics became in his hands uncommon and beautiful. From the very first sonnet Shakespeare's profound affection looks out wistfully, with a mingled air of intense admiration and intense pathos:—

"Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament,
And only herald to the gaudy spring."

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The cry is muffled in the flowing convention of these lines; but it is Adam's cry to Orlando:—

“ Master, go on, and I will follow thee
To the last gasp with truth and loyalty.”

It is the voice of Viola:—

“ And I most jocund, apt and willingly
To do you rest a thousand deaths would die;”

the voice of Antonio, of Imogen, of Kent, of Flavius, of Brutus's Portia, of all self-sacrifice.

Lesser men, Swift or Frederick the Great, could put up with makeshifts or forego the friendship of men altogether; but not Cæsar, not Shakespeare. Among those near Shakespeare in degree and vocation, good comrades as they and he doubtless were, not one of them could be the companion of his soul. Rank, wealth, beauty, youth; the pathos of distance which extorted that resolute measured complaint—

“ Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in like the dyer's hand —”

drew him also heart and mind to the magnificent and genial aristocrat whose good-will gave him the command of his theatre. A nature so great and perfect in its humanity as Shakespeare's must surrender itself entirely in friendship as in love. The faults, the offences of his friend are so many knots and rivets of his affection. He searches in himself for the reasons of his friend's indiffer-

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ence ; and when he finds that there are others who share an equal intimacy and are even sometimes preferred, it is upon himself his jealousy turns —

“ I grant, sweet love, thy lovely argument
Deserves the travail of a worthier pen ; ”

but although in his despondent mood he desires “ this man’s art and that man’s scope,” he knows well there is no “ worthier pen,” and must say so, turning it off with a conceit —

“ But when your countenance filled up his line,
Then lacked I matter ; that enfeebled mine.”

Shakespeare’s friendship for his patron was as infinite as his soul, and this infinite affection finds in the eighty-eighth sonnet expression so terrible that our souls shudder at it : —

“ When thou shalt be disposed to set me light,
And place my merit in the eye of scorn,
Upon thy side against myself I ’ll fight
And prove thee virtuous, though thou art forsworn.
With mine own weakness being best acquainted,
Upon thy part I can set down a story
Of faults concealed wherein I am attained,
That thou in losing me shalt win much glory :
And I by this will be a gainer too ;
For bending all my loving thoughts on thee,
The injuries that to myself I do,
Doing thee vantage, double-vantage me.
Such is my love, to thee I so belong,
That for thy right myself will bear all wrong.”

“ Out of his weakness and his melancholy ” this cry is wrung. It is not only his capricious friend, it is man-

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kind Shakespeare addresses. He was utterly alone ; the fate of supreme genius ; to him intolerable, being most human, most humane. How utterly alone, the second series of sonnets shows.

Shakespeare had no personal experience of a spiritual regard like that of Michael Angelo for Vittoria Colonna : the " public means which public manners breeds " made that perhaps impossible. The dark lady of the sonnets, while her power lasted, held him bound in sensual chains. As to his friend, so to his mistress, it was a complete surrender : —

" Can'st thou, O cruel ! say I love thee not,
When I against myself with thee partake ? "

No question, there was degradation and bitter shame in Shakespeare's passion for this

" Whitely wanton with a velvet brow
And two pitch balls stuck in her face for eyes. "

He strove to transcend his senses ; to see her other than she was, with the strangest, ineffectual, half-humorous, half-ludicrous imagery : —

" And truly not the morning sun of heaven
Better becomes the grey cheeks of the east,
Not that full star that ushers in the even
Doth half that glory to the sober west
As those two mourning eyes become thy face. "

His soul was in arms against her from the beginning, and the re-action after her caresses (Sonnet CXXIX.) is

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the breathless recovery of a half-throttled creature escaped from a python. But escape was not easy; even when she had become the mistress of his friend he was powerless in the strong toil of her fascination. Not until his soul seemed entirely quelled (Sonnet CLI.) could the passion end; then indeed it went out, like a smoky lamp that falls with a crash:—

“For I have sworn thee fair; more perjured I
To swear against the truth so foul a lie.”

That is the concluding couplet of the hundred and fifty-second sonnet: the two remaining sonnets do not belong to the series. The passion ends; executed; cut off; forgotten. Not so, the friendship: Shakespeare cherishes the memory of that; and the farewell sonnet (CXXXVI.) is a promise of undying affection.

It seems impossible to avoid the conclusion, even if it were desirable to do so, that the sonnets of Shakespeare, often careless in expression, and now and again in a half-earnest mood as of one writing to exercise a gift or out of sheer *ennui*, contain a record essentially honest and sometimes terribly sincere of two interwoven experiences which touched him profoundly. They are part of the schooling of Shakespeare; the seed-plot of Hamlet and Horatio, Brutus and Cassius, of Antony and Cleopatra, of Edmund, Edgar, Goneril, Regan. We need not fit names either to the friend or to the mistress: the friend is man; the mistress, woman. The friendship and the love of Shakespeare, the supreme genius, could not fail

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to yield the saddest story: there was no companion for him among men; no mate among women.

Throughout the sonnets Shakespeare, as was his wont, is much more interested in the matter than the manner. It is quite clear also that in following the fashion he adopted a form which hampered the movement of his mind, and crippled his imagination. The feebleness of the tag which concludes, is in sad contrast with the splendid energy which opens, almost every sonnet. But even where the sonnets are sequential it is impossible to read them pleasantly without this rudimentary appendix: the resolution of the underlying dissonance in the alternate rhymes by the consonant chord of the couplet will be found upon trial more agreeable than the super-session of the emptiest tag. The æsthetic loom of the sonnets is a civil war between the poet—that is, the whole man, Shakespeare—and the brain of Shakespeare; a strife to be found in all his writings and in all poetry. The brain is only a register and sifter—at the highest an alembic; but its perpetual endeavour is towards an autocratic tyranny. A thinker is one who has permitted his brain to get the upper hand, exactly as the epicure gives the reins of power to his palate. In the poet, above all in the master-poet Shakespeare, the nerves, the heart, the liver, the germs of life that apprehend and think and feel—the whole assembly of his being is in perfect harmony while the poetical rapture lasts: no organ is master; a diapason extends throughout the entire scale: his whole body, his whole soul is rapt into the making of his poetry. Imagination, like love, gathers in its ecstasy

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the whole flower of being; but the mind is constantly escaping, interfering, controlling — a necessary provision against debauchery and insanity. Hence it is that poetry only *occurs*, and that even in the shortest poem there are lines which are not poetry. Hence also rhyme, always containing more of intellect than of sensibility, is merely a wanton adornment, or a coy veil, of rhythm — rhythm, which is poetry in its naked beauty. In his sonnets Shakespeare is tethered by the form and fettered by rhyme — of the latter he was never a remarkable exponent; yet if he had written nothing else than the sonnets he would have been at least one of the greatest of English poets; and his devout adorers might have imagined what variety of rhythm lay hidden in the measured cadence of these lines —

“That time of year thou may'st in me behold
When yellow leaves or none or few do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold;”

or of these —

“How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame
Which like a canker in the fragrant rose
Doth spot the beauty of thy budding name;”

although no other imagination than Shakespeare's could have touched so tragic a pathos with the first image as Macbeth's

“I have lived long enough : my way of life
Is fallen into the seer, the yellow leaf;”

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or inshrined the second in such a miracle of utterance as
Viola's

“ She never told her love ;
But let concealment like a worm i' the bud
Feed on her damask cheek.”

JOHN DAVIDSON.

SONNETS¹

¹ "Shakespeare's *Sonnets* Never before Imprinted" was first published in quarto in 1609, with the appendix of *A Lover's Complaint*. All the *Sonnets* save eight were reissued in a different order (and mingled indiscriminately with the poems of *The Passionate Pilgrim*) in "*Poems*, written by Will. Shakespeare, Gent." in 1640. The omitted sonnets were those numbered here xviii, xix, xliii, lvi, lxxv, lxxvi, xcvi, cxxvi.

TO . THE . ONLIE . BEGETTER . OF .
 THESE . INSVING . SONNETS .
 M^r W. H.¹ ALL . HAPPINESSE .
 AND . THAT . ETERNITIE .
 PROMISED .
 BY .
 OVR . EVER-LIVING . POET .
 WISHETH ²
 THE . WELL-WISHING .
 ADVENTVRER . IN .
 SETTING .
 FORTH ³

T. T.⁴

¹ *The onlie begetter* . . . M^r W. H.] "Begetter" seems to mean here "procurer," *sc.* of the manuscripts which T[homas] T[horpe], the adventurous publisher of the *Sonnets*, and the signatory of this dedication, was here printing. "Beget" is constantly found in Elizabethan English in the sense of "procure" without any implication of "breed" or "generate." Cf. *Lucrece*, 1004-1005: "the thing . . . *Begets* him hate"; *Hamlet*, III, ii, 7: "acquire and *beget* a temperance"; Dekker's *Satiromastix* (1602): "Some cousins-german at court shall *beget* you (*i. e.*, procure for you) the reversion of the master of the King's revels." (Hawkins' "Origin of the English Drama," iii, 156.) M^r W. H., "the begetter," doubtless a trade friend of the publisher, stood to the volume in much the same relation as John Bodenham, a well-known contemporary anthologist, stood to the collection of miscellaneous poetic extracts, which the stationer Hugh Astley published under the title of "Belvedere, or Garden of the Muses," in 1600. A preliminary dedicatory sonnet to Bodenham addresses him as "first *causer* and *collectour* of these floures," and in the colophon the publisher calls Bodenham the "gentleman who was the *cause* of this collection." In like sense M^r W. H., the publisher's trade friend, was the "causer" and the "cause" of Thorpe's volume. See Oxford facsimile of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, 1609 (1905, Preface, p. 37).

² *all happinesse* . . . *wisheth*] This is a modification of a very common dedicatory formula of the day in which the words "all happiness" and "eternity" were invariably governed by the same inflection "wisheth" of the verb "wish." The poets habitually promised eternity to their patrons, and the dedicatory here "wisheth" his friend, M^r W. H., "eternitie" no less grudgingly than Shakespeare "our everliving poet" offered his own friend (whose identity is not revealed) the promise of eternity in the sonnets which follow.

³ *The well-wishing* . . . *forth*] The benevolent speculator in this venture. "Advertiser in setting forth" is technical mercantile language which is often found in dedications penned by Elizabethan publishers.

⁴ *T. T.*] Thomas Thorpe, a publisher in a small way of business, who owned the copyright in the poems contained in the *Sonnets*, Quarto of 1609. He is not otherwise associated with the ownership or publication of Shakespeare's writing. See Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*, Appendix V.



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I
R O M F A I R E S T
creatures we desire increase,
That thereby beauty's rose
might never die,
But as the riper should by time
decease,
His tender heir might bear his
memory:
But thou, contracted to thine
own bright eyes,
Feed'st thy light's flame with
self-substantial fuel,
Making a famine where abund-
ance lies,

Thyself thy foe, to thy sweet self too cruel.
Thou that art now the world's fresh ornament

1, 1-4 *From fairest creatures . . . his memory*] The argument which is here initiated and is continued in the first seventeen sonnets that a human being of exceptional beauty owes it to the world to procreate children for the benefit of future ages is a common theme of Renaissance poetry, and is repeatedly found in the addresses of poets to young

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10

And only herald to the gaudy spring,
 Within thine own bud buriest thy content
 And, tender churl, makest waste in niggarding.
 Pity the world, or else this glutton be,
 To eat the world's due, by the grave and thee.

II

When forty winters shall besiege thy brow
 And dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field,

- patrons. Erasmus seems to have set the fashion of the argument in his colloquy, *Proci et Puellae* (Of a suitor and a maiden). The plea is twice versified elaborately in Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (bk. iii), firstly, in the talk between Cecropia and Philoclea and, secondly, in the addresses of the old dependant Geron to his master Prince Histor. In Guarini's *Pastor Fido* (1585) the old dependant Linco similarly addresses himself to his master, the hero Silvio (Act I). Shakespeare dealt with the theme in *Venus and Adonis* thrice (129-132, 162-174, 751-768), as well as in *Rom. and Jul.*, I, i, 213-218. See also *Mids. N. Dr.*, I, i, 76-78; *All's Well*, I, i, 117 *seq.*; and *Tw. Night*, I, v, 225-227.
- 5 *contracted*] betrothed; a common usage. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, IV, ii, 16: "contracted bachelors." So *infra*, lvi, 10.
- 6 *Feed'st . . . self-substantial fuel*] Feedest the brilliance of thy eyes with fuel of thine own substance, *i. e.*, sight of thyself.
- 10 *only herald . . . spring*] first blossom promising the bright coloured spring.
- 11 *thy content*] what is contained in thee, thy individuality.
- 12 *makest waste in niggarding*] Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, I, i, 215-216: "BEN. Then she hath sworn that she will still live chaste? ROM. She hath, and in that *sparing makes huge waste.*"
- 13-14 *this glutton be . . . and thee*] play the part of the glutton (who absorbs more than is necessary for his sustenance) by wilfully consuming the progeny which you owe the world, — in virtue of the two facts that the grave will in due time claim thee, and that thy personal beauty, which deserves to live, must perish if thou diest childless.
- II, 2 *dig deep trenches . . . field*] Cf. *Tit. Andr.*, V, ii, 23: "Witness these *trenches* made by grief and care."

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Thy youth's proud livery, so gazed on now,
Will be a tatter'd weed, of small worth held:
Then being ask'd where all thy beauty lies,
Where all the treasure of thy lusty days,
To say, within thine own deep-sunken eyes,
Were an all-eating shame and thriftless praise.
How much more praise deserved thy beauty's use,
If thou couldst answer "This fair child of mine" 10
Shall sum my count and make my old excuse,"
Proving his beauty by succession thine!
 This were to be new made when thou art old,
 And see thy blood warm when thou feel'st it cold.

III

Look in thy glass, and tell the face thou viewest
Now is the time that face should form another;
Whose fresh repair if now thou not renewest,
Thou dost beguile the world, unbless some mother.
For where is she so fair whose unear'd womb
Disdains the tillage of thy husbandry?

4 *a tatter'd weed*] a ragged garment. The 1609 Quarto reads *totter'd* for *tatter'd*; so again xxvi, 11, *infra*.

8 *thriftless*] profitless, useless.

11 *Shall sum . . . old excuse*] Shall give full account of me, and offer excuse for, or justify, my age. Cf. for the whole context Sidney's *Arcadia* (bk. iii, 1674 ed., p. 403): "Riches of children pass a prince's throne, Which touch the father's heart with secret joy, When without shame he saith 'These be mine own.'"

III, 5-6 *whose unear'd womb . . . husbandry*] Cf. *Meas. for Meas.*, I, iv, 43-44: "her plenteous *womb* Expresseth his full *till and husbandry*." "Unear'd" is unploughed or untilled.

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Or who is he so fond will be the tomb
Of his self-love, to stop posterity?
Thou art thy mother's glass, and she in thee
Calls back the lovely April of her prime:
So thou through windows of thine age shalt see,
Despite of wrinkles, this thy golden time.
 But if thou live, remember'd not to be,
 Die single, and thine image dies with thee.

10

IV

Unthrifty loveliness, why dost thou spend
Upon thyself thy beauty's legacy?
Nature's bequest gives nothing, but doth lend,

7-8 *who is he so fond . . . to stop posterity*] Cf. Sidney's *Arcadia* (bk. iii, 1674 ed., p. 402): Geron to Histor, "Thy commonwealth may rightly grieved be Which must by this Immortal be preserved If thus thou *murther thy posteritie*. His very being he hath not deserved Who *for a self-conceit* will that forbear Whereby that being aye must be con-served." For like references elsewhere in Shakespeare see i, 1-4, *supra*, and note.

9-10 *Thou art thy mother's glass . . . prime*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 1758-1759: "Poor broken *glass*, I often did behold In thy sweet semblance my old age new born."

11 *through windows of thine age*] Cf. *Lover's Compl.*, 14: "Some beauty peep'd through *lattice* of sear'd age."

12 *thy golden time*] Cf. *Rich. III*, I, ii, 246: "the golded prime of this sweet prince."

iv, 1-4 *Unthrifty loveliness . . . are free*] Cf. Guarini's *Pastor Fido* (Act I, Sc. i): "a che ti diè natura Ne' più begli anni tuoi Fior di beltà sì delicato e vago, Se tu sei tanto a calpestarlo intento?" Fanshawe translates:

 "Why did *frank Nature* upon thee bestow
 Blossoms of beauty in thy prime, so sweet
 And fair, for thee to trample under feet?"

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And being frank, she lends to those are free.
 Then, beauteous niggard, why dost thou abuse
 The bounteous largess given thee to give?
 Profitless usurer, why dost thou use
 So great a sum of sums, yet canst not live?
 For having traffic with thyself alone,
 Thou of thyself thy sweet self dost deceive. 10
 Then how, when nature calls thee to be gone,
 What acceptable audit canst thou leave?
 Thy unused beauty must be tomb'd with thee,
 Which, used, lives th' executor to be.

V

Those hours that with gentle work did frame
 The lovely gaze where every eye doth dwell
 Will play the tyrants to the very same
 And that unfair which fairly doth excel:
 For never-resting time leads summer on
 To hideous winter and confounds him there;
 Sap check'd with frost and lusty leaves quite gone
 Beauty o'ersnow'd and bareness every where:
 Then, were not summer's distillation left,

⁴ *And being frank . . . are free*] And being generous, she lends to those who are liberal. Cf. *Meas. for Meas.*, I, i, 37-41: "Nature never lends," etc. v, 2 *gaze*] subject or object of observation. Cf. *Macb.*, V, viii, 24: "to be the show and *gaze* o' the time."

⁴ *unfair*] unbeautify, make ugly. Cf. cxxvii, 6: "*Fairing* the foul."

⁹ *summer's distillation*] the extracted essence of the summer flowers. So line 13, *infra*; vi, 2-3, *infra*; and *Mids. N. Dr.*, I, i, 76: "earthlier happy is the rose *distill'd*." See also liv, 13-14, *infra*. The identical illustration from the rose figures in Erasmus' colloquy, "Proci et Puellae."

SONNETS

10

A liquid prisoner pent in walls of glass,
 Beauty's effect with beauty were bereft,
 Nor it, nor no remembrance what it was:
 But flowers distill'd, though they with winter meet,
 Leese but their show; their substance still lives sweet.

VI

Then let not winter's ragged hand deface
 In thee thy summer, ere thou be distill'd:
 Make sweet some vial; treasure thou some place
 With beauty's treasure, ere it be self-kill'd.
 That use is not forbidden usury,
 Which happies those that pay the willing loan;
 That 's for thyself to breed another thee,
 Or ten times happier, be it ten for one;
 Ten times thyself were happier than thou art,
 If ten of thine ten times refigured thee: 10
 Then what could death do, if thou shouldst depart,
 Leaving thee living in posterity?
 Be not self-will'd, for thou art much too fair
 To be death's conquest and make worms thine heir.

10 *A liquid prisoner . . . glass*] Cf. Sidney's *Arcadia* (bk. iii, 1674 ed., p. 246): "Have you ever seen a *pure rosewater* kept in a *crystal glass*? How fine it looks, how sweet it smells, while that beautiful glass imprisons it. Break the prison, and let the water take his own course. Doth it not embrace dust, and lose of its former sweetness and fairness?"

14 *Leese*] Lose; an archaic word, occasionally found in Elizabethan English. See *Poems* by Thomas Watson (ed. Arber, pp. 44, 51).

vi, 1 *ragged*] rugged. Cf. *Rich. II*, V, v, 21: "ragged prison walls."

5 *That use*] That lending or investment of money at interest. So *Venus and Adonis*, 768: "gold that 's put to *use* more gold begets," and *Merch. of Ven.*, I, iii, 40: "The rate of *usance*."

SONNETS

VII

Lo, in the orient when the gracious light
Lifts up his burning head, each under eye
Doth homage to his new-appearing sight,
Serving with looks his sacred majesty;
And having climb'd the steep-up heavenly hill,
Resembling strong youth in his middle age,
Yet mortal looks adore his beauty still,
Attending on his golden pilgrimage;
But when from highmost pitch, with weary car,
Like feeble age, he reeleth from the day,
The eyes, 'fore duteous, now converted are
From his low tract, and look another way:
 So thou, thyself out-going in thy noon,
 Unlook'd on diest, unless thou get a son.

10

VIII

Music to hear, why hear'st thou music sadly?
Sweets with sweets war not, joy delights in joy.

VII, 1-4 *Lo, in the orient . . . majesty*] A graphic description of sun-worship repeated in many early plays. Cf. *L. L. L.*, IV, iii, 220, and note there.

5 *steep-up*] very steep. Cf. *Pass. Pilg.*, ix, 5: "Her stand she takes upon a *steep-up* hill."

10 *reeleth from the day*] Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, IV, iii, 3-4: "darkness like a drunkard reels *From forth day's path*."

11-12 *converted are From his low tract*] turn from his declining course. Cf. *Rich. II*, III, iii, 66-67 (of the sunset): "the *track* Of his bright *passage*."

VIII A MS. copy in a seventeenth-century commonplace book in the

SONNETS

Why lovest thou that which thou receivest not gladly,
Or else receivest with pleasure thine annoy?
If the true concord of well tuned sounds,
By unions married, do offend thine ear,
They do but sweetly chide thee, who confounds
In singleness the parts that thou shouldst bear.
Mark how one string, sweet husband to another,
Strikes each in each by mutual ordering; 10
Resembling sire and child and happy mother,
Who, all in one, one pleasing note do sing:
Whose speechless song, being many, seeming one,
Sings this to thee: "Thou single wilt prove none."

IX

Is it for fear to wet a widow's eye
That thou consumest thyself in single life?
Ah! if thou issueless shalt hap to die,
The world will wail thee, like a makeless wife;
The world will be thy widow, and still weep
That thou no form of thee hast left behind,

British Museum (MS. Add. 15226, f. 4 b) bears the heading: "In laudem musice et opprobrium contemptorij (*sic*) eiusdem."

1 *Music to hear*] Thou who art music to hear; thou whose voice is music. Cf. cxxviii, 1, *infra*: "Thou my music."

14 *Sings this . . . prove none*] The 1609 Quarto has no stops here save at the end of the line. The Brit. Mus. MS. punctuates it thus: *Sings this to thee, Thou single, shalt prove none*. Malone first gave the accepted punctuation. There is allusion here to the common proverbial jest, "One is no number." Cf. cxxxvi, 8, *infra*, and *Rom. and Jul.*, I, ii, 32-33, and note.

ix, 4 *makeless*] companionless; "make" is a common archaic word for "mate."

SONNETS

When every private widow well may keep
By children's eyes her husband's shape in mind.
Look, what an unthrift in the world doth spend
Shifts but his place, for still the world enjoys it; 10
But beauty's waste hath in the world an end,
And kept unused, the user so destroys it.
 No love toward others in that bosom sits
 That on himself such murderous shame commits.

x

For shame! deny that thou bear'st love to any,
Who for thyself art so unprovident.
Grant, if thou wilt, thou art beloved of many,
But that thou none lovest is most evident;
For thou art so possess'd with murderous hate
That 'gainst thyself thou stick'st not to conspire,
Seeking that beauteous roof to ruinate
Which to repair should be thy chief desire.
O, change thy thought, that I may change my mind!

9-10 *what an unthrift . . . his place*] that which a spendthrift squanders merely changes its place or ownership.

13 *No love . . . sits*] Chapman similarly addresses his patron the Duke of Lennox in his translation of Homer's *Iliad* (1598):

 "None ever lived by self-love; *others' good*
 Is th' object of our own. They living die
 That bury in themselves their fortunes' brood."

x, 7 *that beauteous roof to ruinate*] to destroy that splendid household or family of thine. Cf. *Lucrece*, 944: "To ruinate proud buildings with thine hours." So *3 Hen. VI*, V, i, 83: "I will not *ruinate* my father's house," and *Two Gent.*, V, iv, 8-10. For different application of the image of a ruined building, see cxix, 11.

9 *my mind*] my opinion of thy character.

SONNETS

Shall hate be fairer lodged than gentle love? 10
Be, as thy presence is, gracious and kind,
Or to thyself at least kind-hearted prove:
Make thee another self, for love of me,
That beauty still may live in thine or thee.

XI

As fast as thou shalt wane, so fast thou grow'st
In one of thine, from that which thou departest;
And that fresh blood which youngly thou bestow'st
Thou mayst call thine when thou from youth convertest.
Herein lives wisdom, beauty and increase;
Without this, folly, age and cold decay:
If all were minded so, the times should cease
And threescore year would make the world away.
Let those whom Nature hath not made for store,
Harsh, featureless and rude, barrenly perish: 10
Look, whom she best endow'd she gave the more;
Which bounteous gift thou shouldst in bounty cherish:
She carved thee for her seal, and meant thereby
Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy
die.

x1, 9 [*for store*] for purpose of reproduction or replenishment. Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, III, vi, 36 (of nature's reproductive processes): "the stocke [*sc.* of *Dame Nature*] . . . still remains in everlasting *store* [*i. e.*, in state of perpetual replenishment]" and xiv, 12, *infra*.

11 *she gave the more*] Thus the Quarto. Malone read *she gave thee more*, which simplifies the passage and is a justifiable change.

14 *that copy*] the carving on the original seal, whence impressions can be taken. Cf. *Tw. Night*, I, v, 227: "And leave the world no *copy*."

SONNETS

XII

When I do count the clock that tells the time,
And see the brave day sunk in hideous night;
When I behold the violet past prime,
And sable curls all silver'd o'er with white;
When lofty trees I see barren of leaves,
Which erst from heat did canopy the herd,
And summer's green all girded up in sheaves,
Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard,
Then of thy beauty do I question make, 10
That thou among the wastes of time must go,
Since sweets and beauties do themselves forsake
And die as fast as they see others grow;
 And nothing 'gainst Time's scythe can make
 defence
 Save breed, to brave him when he takes thee hence.

XIII

O, that you were yourself! but, love, you are
No longer yours than you yourself here live:

xii, 3 *the violet past prime*] Cf. *Hamlet*, I, iii, 7: "A violet in the youth
of primy nature."

4 *And sable curls . . . white*] Cf. *Hamlet*, I, ii, 239-241: "his beard
. . . A sable silver'd."

7-8 *summer's green . . . beard*] Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, II, i, 94-95: "the
green corn Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard."

14 *Save breed*] Except children.

xiii, 1 *yourself*] independent of conditions of time. The use for the first
time of "your," "you," etc., instead of the customary "thy," "thou,"
etc., is noticeable. The plural usage is only found repeated in
thirty-four of the one hundred and fifty-four sonnets.

SONNETS

Against this coming end you should prepare,
And your sweet semblance to some other give.
So should that beauty which you hold in lease
Find no determination; then you were
Yourself again, after yourself's decease,
When your sweet issue your sweet form should bear.
Who lets so fair a house fall to decay,
Which husbandry in honour might uphold 10
Against the stormy gusts of winter's day
And barren rage of death's eternal cold?
O, none but unthrifths: dear my love, you know
You had a father; let your son say so.

XIV

Not from the stars do I my judgement pluck;
And yet methinks I have astronomy,
But not to tell of good or evil luck,
Of plagues, of dearths, or seasons' quality;
Nor can I fortune to brief minutes tell,
Pointing to each his thunder, rain and wind,
Or say with princes if it shall go well,
By oft predict that I in heaven find:

9-12 *Who lets . . . eternal cold*] Cf. Sidney's *Arcadia* (bk. iii, 1674 ed., p. 403): "Thy *house* by thee must live or else be gone, And then who shall the name of *Histor* nourish?"

10 *husbandry*] economy, prudence.

xiv, 2 *astronomy*] astrology. So Sidney's *Arcadia* (bk. iii, 1674 ed., p. 244): "thy heavenly face is my astronomy." Cf. *Astrophel*, xxvi, l: "dusty wits dare scorn *astrology*."

6 *Pointing*] Appointing; so *Lucrece*, 879: "*point'st* the season."

8 *By oft predict*] By constant prediction or prophecy.

SONNETS

But from thine eyes my knowledge I derive,
And, constant stars, in them I read such art, 10
As truth and beauty shall together thrive,
If from thyself to store thou wouldst convert;
 Or else of thee this I prognosticate:
 Thy end is truth's and beauty's doom and date.

XV

When I consider every thing that grows
Holds in perfection but a little moment,
That this huge stage presenteth nought but shows
Whereon the stars in secret influence comment;
When I perceive that men as plants increase,
Cheered and check'd even by the self-same sky,
Vaunt in their youthful sap, at height decrease,
And wear their brave state out of memory;
Then the conceit of this inconstant stay

9 *from thine eyes . . . I derive*] Cf. *L. L. L.*, IV, iii, 346: "From women's eyes this doctrine I derive."

10 *constant stars . . . art*] Cf. Daniel's *Delia*, xxxiv, 5 (of Delia's eyes): "Stars sure they are, whose motions rule desires," etc. "Art" means astrological knowledge.

12 *If from thyself . . . convert*] If thou wouldst "convert thyself" [*i.e.*, turn] from conservation of thyself to replenishment of the future. See xi, 9, *supra*, and note.

14 *Thy end . . . beauty's doom and date*] Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 1019: "For he being dead, with him is beauty slain."

xv, 3 *this huge stage . . . shows*] an embryonic hint of Shakespeare's familiar comparison of the stage and the world in *As you like it*, II, vii, 139 *seq.* Cf. Spenser's *Amoretti*, liv: "Of this world's theatre in which we stay."

9 *the conceit . . . stay*] the notion or idea of this mutability of nature.

SONNETS

Sets you most rich in youth before my sight, 10
Where wasteful Time debateth with Decay,
To change your day of youth to sullied night;
 And all in war with Time for love of you,
 As he takes from you, I engraft you new.

XVI

But wherefore do not you a mightier way
Make war upon this bloody tyrant, Time?
And fortify yourself in your decay
With means more blessed than my barren rhyme?
Now stand you on the top of happy hours,
And many maiden gardens, yet unset,
With virtuous wish would bear your living flowers
Much liker than your painted counterfeit:
So should the lines of life that life repair,

Cf. Ovid's *Metam.*, xv (Golding's transl., first published in 1567): "In all the world there is not that that standeth at a *stay*" (1612 ed., p. 185 b), and "Our bodies also cry To alter still from time to time and never stand at *stay*." Shakespeare gives numerous signs in this and other sonnets of familiarity with Golding's rendering of the philosophic disquisition on the mutability of nature which fills a large space in Ovid, *Metam.*, bk. xv; see xxxix, xlv, lv, lix, lx, lxiii, lxiv, cxxiii.

12 *To change . . . sullied night*] Cf. *Rich. III*, IV, iv, 16: "Hath dimm'd your infant morn to aged night."

xvi, 3 *fortify yourself*] See lxiii, 9, and note.

6 *unset*] unsown, unplanted. Cf. *Pericles*, IV, vi, 84: "your herb-woman, she that *sets* seeds." So *Lover's Compl.*, 171 (of the seducer): "his plants in others' orchards grew."

8 *counterfeit*] picture.

9 *the lines of life*] the delineation of life in children.

SONNETS

Which this, Time's pencil, or my pupil pen, 10
Neither in inward worth nor outward fair,
Can make you live yourself in eyes of men,
 To give away yourself keeps yourself still;
And you must live, drawn by your own sweet
 skill.

XVII

Who will believe my verse in time to come,
If it were fill'd with your most high deserts?
Though yet, heaven knows, it is but as a tomb
Which hides your life and shows not half your
 parts.
If I could write the beauty of your eyes
And in fresh numbers number all your graces,
The age to come would say "This poet lies;
Such heavenly touches ne'er touch'd earthly faces."
So should my papers, yellowed with their age,
Be scorn'd, like old men of less truth than tongue, 10

10 *this, Time's pencil*] this painting, the work of the artist's pencil which is subject to Time's ruin.

10-12 *my pupil pen . . . in eyes of men*] This avowal of inability on the part of the poet's youthful pen to conserve his friends' fame is bluntly contradicted in xviii, 13-14, *infra*, and many times elsewhere.

11 *fair*] beauty. So xviii, 7, 10, *infra*.

13 *To give away . . . still*] To produce likenesses of yourself will keep your memory alive.

xvii, 5-6 *If I could . . . your graces*] Cf. *L. L. L.*, IV, iii, 318-319: "Such fiery numbers as the prompting eye Of beauty's tutors have enrich'd you with."

9 *So should my papers, etc.*] See xvi, 10, and note.

SONNETS

And your true rights be term'd a poet's rage
And stretched metre of an antique song :
But were some child of yours alive that time,
You should live twice, in it and in my rhyme.

XVIII

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day ?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate :
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date :
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd ;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,
By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd ;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest ; 10
Nor shall Death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st :
So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

11 *a poet's rage*] Cf. c, 3: "Spend'st thou thy fury on some worthless song."

12 *And stretched . . . song*] The motto of Keats' *Endymion*.

xviii This sonnet was omitted from Shakespeare's "Poems" of 1640.

3 *Rough winds . . . buds of May*] So *T. of Shrew*, V, ii, 140: "as whirlwinds shake fair buds," and *Cymb.*, I, iii, 36-37: "the tyrannous breathing of the north Shakes all our buds from growing."

5 *the eye of heaven*] the sun. Cf. *Lucrece*, 1088, and note.

7-10 *fair . . . fair . . . fair*] beauty. Cf. xvi, 11, *supra*, and lxxviii, 3, *infra*.

8 *untrimm'd*] divested of ornament.

12 *in eternal lines*] The poet's boast of the immortality of his verse and of

SONNETS

XIX

Devouring Time, blunt thou the lion's paws,
And make the earth devour her own sweet brood;
Pluck the keen teeth from the fierce tiger's jaws,
And burn the long-lived phoenix in her blood;
Make glad and sorry seasons as thou fleet'st,
And do whate'er thou wilt, swift-footed Time,
To the wide world and all her fading sweets;
But I forbid thee one most heinous crime:
O, carve not with thy hours my love's fair brow,
Nor draw no lines there with thine antique pen; 10
Him in thy course untainted do allow
For beauty's pattern to succeeding men.
 Yet do thy worst, old Time: despite thy wrong,
 My love shall in my verse ever live young.

its power of "eternizing" him or her whom it commemorates constantly recurs *infra*. It was a sentiment common to all the great poets of the European Renaissance, and echoed a similar claim preferred by the classical poets from Pindar to Horace and Ovid. Cf. Spenser's *Amoretti* (1595), Sonnet lxxv: "My verse your virtues rare shall eternize, And in the heavens write your glorious name." Drayton and Daniel reiterated the conceit with all the boldness of Shakespeare and Spenser, and in very similar phraseology.

XIX This sonnet was omitted from Shakespeare's "Poems" of 1640.

1 *Devouring Time*] Another echo of Ovid's philosophic argument (see xv, 9, *supra*). Cf. Ovid's *Metam.*, xv, 234: "Tempus edax rerum," etc., which Golding translates: "Thou Time, the eater up of things and age of spitefull teen, Destroy all things" (ed. 1612, p. 186 a). Ovid illustrates Time's action some lines below by the story of the phoenix, to which also allusion is made in this sonnet, line 4.

4 *in her blood*] alive.

SONNETS

XX

A woman's face with Nature's own hand painted
Hast thou, the master-mistress of my passion;
A woman's gentle heart, but not acquainted
With shifting change, as is false women's fashion;
An eye more bright than theirs, less false in rolling,
Gilding the object whereupon it gazeth;
A man in hue, all hues in his controlling,
Which steals men's eyes and women's souls amazeth.
And for a woman wert thou first created;
Till Nature, as she wrought thee, fell a-doting,

10

- xx, 5 *An eye more bright . . . rolling*] Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, III, i, 41: "Her wanton *eyes* (ill signs of womanhead) Did *roll* too lightly."
7 *A man in hue, all hues in his controlling*] A man in aspect, who exerts control or influence over the complexions or countenances of all manner of persons. The Quarto has the common Elizabethan spelling "hew" and "Hews," the latter word being italicised. (No particular significance seems attachable to the capital H or to the italics, which the Cambridge editors indicate superfluously by inverted commas.) "Hue" has here the general sense of "shape" or "external aspect"; "hues" the more specialised sense of "complexions" or "countenances" (cf. civ, 11: "your sweet *hue*"). When Pyrocles in Sidney's *Arcadia* (1674 ed., p. 43) disguises himself as a woman, he writes a sonnet to his lady-love, ending thus (with a slight pun): "What marvel then I take *a woman's hue* (*i. e.*, aspect or shape) Since that I see, think, know is all but *you*." For "hues in his *controlling*, which steals men's eyes," etc., cf. *Pericles*, IV, i, 42-43: "That excellent *complexion which did steal The eyes* of young and old"; *Hen. VIII*, II, iv, 26-27 (Queen Katharine to Henry VIII): "Yea, *subject to your countenance*, glad or sorry As I saw it inclined," and *infra*, cxlix, 12: "commanded (*i. e.*, controlled or influenced) by the motion of thine *eyes*."

SONNETS

And by addition me of thee defeated,
By adding one thing to my purpose nothing.
But since she prick'd thee out for women's pleasure,
Mine be thy love, and thy love's use their treasure.

XXI

So it is not with me as with that Muse
Stirr'd by a painted beauty to his verse,
Who heaven itself for ornament doth use
And every fair with his fair doth rehearse,
Making a couplement of proud compare,
With sun and moon, with earth and sea's rich gems,
With April's first-born flowers, and all things rare
That heaven's air in this huge rondure hems.

11 *defeated*] disappointed. Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, IV, i, 154: "Thereby to have *defeated* you and me."

xxi, 1-8 *So it is not . . . rondure hems*] The poet deprecates the extravagant conceits of contemporary poets or sonneteers of love; see lxxvi, 5-6, and cxxx, for more or less satiric comment of like kind.

4 *And every fair . . . rehearse*] And he doth mention every kind of beauty in association with his fair mistress. Shakespeare uses the word "rehearse" (always in the present sense) four times in the *Sonnets* (xxxviii, 4; lxxi, 11; lxxxii, 11) and thirteen times in early plays. It is only found once in later works (*Wint. Tale*, V, ii, 60).

5-6 *Making . . . compare With sun*] Coupling ("his fair") in the way of high-flown simile with sun. Spenser uses the rare word "couplement" in *Faerie Queene*, Bk. IV, canto iii, st. 52, l. 3.

6 *earth and sea's rich gems*] The extravagant figurative use of precious stones in love sonnets of the time is mentioned in *Lover's Compl.*, lines 209-210: "And deep-brain'd sonnets that did amplify Each stone's dear nature, worth, and quality" (see note).

8 *rondure*] circle; from the French "rondeur" which Cotgrave translates "roundness," "globinesse." Cf. *K. John*, II, i, 259: "The

SONNETS

O, let me, true in love, but truly write,
 And then believe me, my love is as fair 10
 As any mother's child, though not so bright
 As those gold candles fix'd in heaven's air:
 Let them say more that like of hearsay well;
 I will not praise that purpose not to sell.

XXII

My glass shall not persuade me I am old,
 So long as youth and thou are of one date;
 But when in thee time's furrows I behold,

- roundure* of your old-faced walls," and Dekker, *Old Fortunatus*, 1600 (1873 ed., vol. i, p. 90): "the sacred *roundure* of mine eyes."
 12 *candles*] Cf. *Merch. of Ven.*, V, i, 220: "*candles* of the night." So Fairfax's translation of Tasso's *Gierusalemme Liberata*, Canto ix, st. 10: "heaven's small *candles*."
 14 *I will not . . . to sell*] Cf. *L. L. L.*, IV, iii, 236: "To things of sale a seller's *praise* belongs," and cii, 3-4, *infra*.
 XXII, 1 *My glass shall not persuade me I am old*] The poet's reflection that he is old is repeated lxii, 9-10 ("But when *my glass* shows me myself indeed"), lxxiii, 1-2, and cxxxviii, 6, *infra*. Such a reflection is conventional among sonneteers of the day. Daniel in *Delia* (1591), xxiii, at twenty-nine wrote: "My years draw on in everlasting night." Richard Barnfield at twenty in his sonnets to Ganymede (1594) wrote: "Behold my grey head full of silver hairs, My wrinkled skin deep furrowed in my face." Drayton in 1594 in *Idea*, xiv: "Looking into the *glass* of my youth's miseries, I see the ugly face of my deformed cares With wrinkled brow all withered with despairs." Petrarch seems to be the originator of this sonneteing convention. Cf. his "In morte di Laura," Sonnet lxxxii:

"Dicemi spesso il mio fidato specchio,
 L'animo stanco e la cangiata scorza
 E la scemata mia destrezza e forza
 Non ti nasconder più: tu se' pur veglio."

SONNETS

Then look I death my days should expiate.
For all that beauty that doth cover thee
Is but the seemly raiment of my heart,
Which in thy breast doth live, as thine in me:
How can I then be elder than thou art?
O, therefore, love, be of thyself so wary
As I, not for myself, but for thee will; 10
Bearing thy heart, which I will keep so chary
As tender nurse her babe from faring ill.
Presume not on thy heart when mine is slain;
Thou gavest me thine, not to give back again.

XXIII

As an unperfect actor on the stage,
Who with his fear is put besides his part,
Or some fierce thing replete with too much rage,
Whose strength's abundance weakens his own heart;
So I, for fear of trust, forget to say
The perfect ceremony of love's rite,
And in mine own love's strength seem to decay,
O'ercharged with burthen of mine own love's might.

(“My faithful glass, my weary spirit and my wrinkled skin, and my decaying wit and strength repeatedly tell me: ‘It cannot longer be hidden from you, you are old.’”)

4 *expiate*] end; a rare usage. Thus the Quarto. Steevens substituted *expire*. Cf. *Rich. III*, III, iii, 23: “the hour of *death* is *expiate*,” where the Second Folio substitutes *now expired*.

10 *but for thee will*] but for thy sake will be wary or careful of myself.

XXIII, 1-2 *As an unperfect actor . . . his part*] Cf. *Cor.*, V, iii, 40-41:

“Like a *dull actor* now I have forgot *my part*.”

5 *for fear of trust*] afraid to trust myself, for lack of confidence.

SONNETS

O, let my books be then the eloquence
 And dumb presagers of my speaking breast; 10
 Who plead for love, and look for recompense,
 More than that tongue that more hath more express'd.
 O, learn to read what silent love hath writ:
 To hear with eyes belongs to love's fine wit.

XXIV

Mine eye hath play'd the painter and hath stell'd
 Thy beauty's form in table of my heart;
 My body is the frame wherein 't is held,

9 *books*] manuscripts. Thus the Quarto. Sewell ingeniously substituted *looks*, but *books* alone agrees with line 13: "O, learn to *read*."

10 *dumb presagers*] players of dumb shows with which plays were often introduced on the stage.

12 *that tongue . . . express'd*] that "unperfect" tongue which would, had it been endowed with greater strength, have expressed more feeling.

xxiv, 1 *stell'd*] Capell's emendation of the original reading *steeld*. "Stelled" means "depicted" or "painted," as in *Lucrece*, 1444. "Steeled" would mean "engraved."

2 *table of my heart*] Cf. *K. John*, II, i, 503: "the flattering *table* of her eye," and *All's Well*, I, i, 89: "*our heart's table*." The common notion of a lover painting or engraving the form of his beloved one on the "table" or canvas of his heart is of especially frequent occurrence in the sonnets of the period in England, France, and Italy. Cf. Ronsard, *Sonnets pour Astrée*, vi, 1-4

'Il ne falloit, maistresse, autres *tablettes*,
 Pour vous graver que *celles de mon cœur*
 Où de sa main Amour, nostre vainqueur,
 Vous a gravée et vos grâces parfaites."

So Tasso, *Rime*, bk. ii, Sonnet xxvi: "se l'immagine vostra," etc., and Watson's *Tears of Fancie* (1593), xlv, xlvi.

SONNETS

And perspective it is best painter's art.
For through the painter must you see his skill,
To find where your true image pictured lies;
Which in my bosom's shop is hanging still,
That hath his windows glazed with thine eyes.
Now see what good turns eyes for eyes have done:
Mine eyes have drawn thy shape, and thine for me 10
Are windows to my breast, where-through the sun
Delights to peep, to gaze therein on thee;
Yet eyes this cunning want to grace their art,
They draw but what they see, know not the heart.

xxv

Let those who are in favour with their stars
Of public honour and proud titles boast,
Whilst I, whom fortune of such triumph bars,
Unlook'd for joy in that I honour most.

4 *perspective*] in point of perspective, which is the art of producing the illusion of distance. The word is accented on the first syllable. There may be some vague allusion to the perspective glasses, which were cut to produce various optical effects. Cf. *Rich. II*, II, ii, 18: "like *perspectives*," and note.

8 *his windows glazed . . . eyes*] an hyperbolic description of the completeness with which the friend's eyes dominate the poet's heart. The figure is repeated, lines 11-12, *infra*. The imagery is a sonneteering convention. Cf. Constable's *Diana*, Decade i, Sonnet v: "*Thine eye the glass where I behold my heart Mine eye the window through the which thine eye May see my heart.*"

11 *windows to my breast*] Cf. *L. L. L.*, V, ii, 826: "the *window of my heart*, mine eye." Cf. for the common poetic use of "windows" for "eyes," *Venus and Adonis*, 482: "her two blue *windows*" (*i. e.*, eyes); and see line 8, *supra*.

xxv, 4 *Unlook'd for*] Being overlooked, neglected.

SONNETS

Great princes' favourites their fair leaves spread
But as the marigold at the sun's eye,
And in themselves their pride lies buried,
For at a frown they in their glory die.
The painful warrior famoused for fight,
After a thousand victories once foil'd, 10
Is from the book of honour razed quite,
And all the rest forgot for which he toil'd:
Then happy I, that love and am beloved
Where I may not remove nor be removed.

XXVI

Lord of my love, to whom in vassalage
Thy merit hath my duty strongly knit,

5-6 *their fair leaves . . . sun's eye*] Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, I, i, 150-151, where it is said of a bud that it "can *spread his sweet leaves* to the air Or dedicate his beauty to the sun." Such references to the opening and closing of the petals of the garden marigold are frequent in Elizabethan poetry. Cf. Constable's *Diana*, Decade ix, Sonnet i; *Lucrece*, 397-399; *Cymb.*, II, iii, 23-24.

9-12 *The painful warrior . . . which he toil'd*] *Fight* is Theobald's change of the Quarto *worth*, which does not rhyme. The general sentiment is repeated in *Troil. and Cress.*, III, iii, 169-170: "Oh, let not virtue seek Remuneration for the thing it was."

13-14 *Then happy I . . . be removed*] Cf. cxvi, 3: "bends with the *remover* to *remove*." Constable uses "remove" intransitively in the same connection: "But sith resolved love cannot *remove*" (*Diana*, Decade i, Sonnet iv).

XXVI The language here clothes in poetic splendour the prose dedication to Lord Southampton which Shakespeare dutifully prefixed to his poem of *Lucrece* (1594). The dedication begins: "*The love* I dedicate to your lordship is without end . . . were my worth greater, *my duty* would show greater." Cf. cx, 9, *infra*.

SONNETS

To thee I send this written ambassage,
To witness duty, not to show my wit:
Duty so great, which wit so poor as mine
May make seem bare, in wanting words to show it,
But that I hope some good conceit of thine
In thy soul's thought, all naked, will bestow it;
Till whatsoever star that guides my moving,
Points on me graciously with fair aspect, 10
And puts apparel on my tatter'd loving,
To show me worthy of thy sweet respect:
 Then may I dare to boast how I do love thee;
 Till then not show my head where thou mayst
 prove me.

XXVII

Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired;
But then begins a journey in my head,
To work my mind, when body's work's expired:
For then my thoughts, from far where I abide,

7-8 *some good conceit . . . bestow it*] some generous sentiment on thy part will give lodging in thy soul's thought to this dutiful greeting of mine despite the bareness of my language. Cf. for "all naked," ciii, 3: "The argument, *all bare*."

9-10 *star . . . moving . . . aspect*] these words have all their customary astrological significance.

11 *tatter'd*] Cf. ii, 4, *supra*, and note.

XXVII, 3 *then begins a journey in my head*] Cf. Griffin's *Fidessa* (1596), Sonnets xiv and xv: "When silent sleep had closed up mine eyes *My watchful mind* did then begin to muse." The theme of travel, signified by this and the next sonnet, is developed *infra* in *Sonnets* l and li.

SONNETS

Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,
Looking on darkness which the blind do see:
Save that my soul's imaginary sight
Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,
Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,
Makes black night beauteous and her old face new.
Lo, thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
For thee and for myself no quiet find.

10

XXVIII

How can I then return in happy plight,
That am debarr'd the benefit of rest?
When day's oppression is not eased by night,
But day by night, and night by day, oppress'd?

6 *Intend*] Design, purpose.

10 *thy shadow*] Cf. xliii, 11: "thy fair imperfect shade," and lxi, 1: "Is it thy will, thy image," etc., and Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, xxxviii: "This night, which sleep begins," etc. Sleepless nights illumined by apparitions of his mistress Laura form the topic of some of the most characteristic sonnets and canzoni of Petrarch. Cf. "In vita di Laura," Sestina I, and Sonnet xxvi, and "In morte di Laura," Sonnets xiv-xviii. Imitations abound in Italian and French sonnets of the sixteenth century.

11-12 *Which, like a jewel . . . night beauteous*] Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, I, v, 43-44: "she hangs upon the cheek of night *Like a rich jewel* in an Ethiop's ear."

14 *For thee and for myself*] On account of thinking about her by night and working for myself by day.

xxviii, 3-8 *When day's oppression . . . from thee*] Cf. Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnet lxxxix: "Tired with the dusty toils of busy day, Languisht with horrors of the silent night, Suffering the evils both of the day and night."

SONNETS

And each, though enemies to either's reign,
Do in consent shake hands to torture me;
The one by toil, the other to complain
How far I toil, still farther off from thee.
I tell the day, to please him thou art bright,
And dost him grace when clouds do blot the heaven: 10
So flatter I the swart-complexion'd night;
When sparkling stars twire not thou gild'st the even.
 But day doth daily draw my sorrows longer,
 And night doth nightly make grief's strength seem
 stronger.

XXIX

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone bewep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state, 10

12 *twire*] twinkle or peep.

14 *strength*] Capell's substitution for the Quarto *length*.

xxix, 1-9 *When, in disgrace . . . almost despising*] This pessimistic tone which is repeated in *Sonnet lxvi, infra*, recalls Tasso's sequence of melancholy sonnets called "Amicitia tradita." (See *Rime*, Venice, 1620, vol. iii, pt. ix, p. 79 *seq.*) One of these ("Vinca fortuna homai") was translated by Drummond of Hawthornden (*Sonnet xxxiii*): "If fortune triumph now," etc.

SONNETS

Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

XXX

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unused to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan the expense of many a vanish'd sight:

11-12 *Like to the lark . . . heaven's gate*] Cf. Lyly's *Campaspe*, V, i, 37-39: "*The lark . . . so shrill and clear . . . At heaven's gate she claps her wings, The morn not waking till she sings.*" So *Rom. and Jul.*, III, v, 21: "the lark, whose *notes* do beat The vaulty heaven," and *Cymb.*, II, iii, 19-20: "Hark, hark! *the lark at heaven's gate sings.*"

12 *sullen earth*] Cf. 2 *Hen.* VI, I, ii, 5: "thine eyes fix'd to the *sullen earth.*"

xxx, 1 *sessions of . . . thought*] Cf. *Othello*, III, iii, 142-143: "apprehensions . . . in *session* sit."

5 *I drown an eye*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 1239: "they *drown their eyes.*"
an eye, unused to flow] Cf. *Othello*, V, ii, 351-352: "*eyes, Albeit unused to the melting mood.*"

6 *death's dateless night*] Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, V, iii, 115: "A *dateless* bargain to engrossing *death.*" "Dateless" is repeated. So cliii, 6, *infra*.

8 *the expense of many a vanish'd sight*] the spending or wasting of many an object vanished from or lost to view.

SONNETS

Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er 10
The sad account of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new pay as if not paid before.
 But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
 All losses are restored and sorrows end.

XXXI

Thy bosom is endeared with all hearts,
Which I by lacking have supposed dead;
And there reigns love, and all love's loving parts,
And all those friends which I thought buried.
How many a holy and obsequious tear
Hath dear religious love stol'n from mine eye,
As interest of the dead, which now appear
But things removed that hidden in thee lie!
Thou art the grave where buried love doth live, 10
Hung with the trophies of my lovers gone,
Who all their parts of me to thee did give;
That due of many now is thine alone:
 Their images I loved I view in thee,
 And thou, all they, hast all the all of me.

xxxI, 5 *obsequious*] funeral. Cf. *Hamlet*, I, ii, 92: "*obsequious* sorrow";
but see cxxv, 9, *infra*: "*obsequious* in thy heart."

6 *dear religious love*] love making a religion of its affection. Cf. *Lover's Compl.*, 250: "*Religious love* put out Religion's eye."

7 *interest of the dead*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 1797: "My sorrow's *interest*" (*i. e.*, due or right).

SONNETS

XXXII

If thou survive my well-contented day,
When that churl Death my bones with dust shall cover,
And shalt by fortune once more re-survey
These poor rude lines of thy deceased lover,
Compare them with the bettering of the time,
And though they be outstripp'd by every pen,
Reserve them for my love, not for their rhyme,
Exceeded by the height of happier men.
O, then vouchsafe me but this loving thought:
"Had my friend's Muse grown with this growing age, 10
A dearer birth than this his love had brought,
To march in ranks of better equipage:
 But since he died, and poets better prove,
 Theirs for their style I'll read, his for his love."

xxxii, 1 *my well-contented day*] the day which well contents me.

4 *lover*] male friend; so xxxi, 10, and constantly in Elizabethan English.

Brutus calls Cæsar "my best *lover*" (*Jul. Cæs.*, III, ii, 44). Portia describes Antonio as "the *bosom lover*" of Bassanio (*Merch. of Ven.*, III, iv, 17). See also *Troil. and Cress.*, III, iii, 214, and *Cor.*, V, ii, 14.

5 *the bettering of the time*] Cf. 10, *infra*: "this growing age" and also cxxxii, 8, *infra*: "the *time-bettering* days."

7 *Reserve*] Preserve. See lxxxv, 3, and *Pericles*, IV, i, 41-42: "*reserve* That excellent complexion."

12 *To march in ranks . . . equipage*] Cf. Nashe's Pref. to Greene's *Mena-phon*, 1589: "[Watson's works] *march in equipage of honour* with any of your ancient poets"; and Peele's *Farewell*, 1589 (dedic.): "[so that] my countrymen . . . may *march in equipage of honour* and of arms against the Trojans."

SONNETS

XXXIII

Full many a glorious morning have I seen
 Flatter the mountain-tops with sovereign eye,
 Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
 Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy;
 Anon permit the basest clouds to ride
 With ugly rack on his celestial face,
 And from the forlorn world his visage hide,
 Stealing unseen to west with this disgrace:
 Even so my sun one early morn did shine
 With all-triumphant splendour on my brow;
 But, out, alack! he was but one hour mine,
 The region cloud hath mask'd him from me now.

10

xxxiii, 1-2 *Full many . . . eye*] Shakespeare thus describes many times the splendour of sunrise. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 857-858: "Who doth the world so gloriously behold, That cedar-tops and hills seem burnish'd gold." For the application of the word "flatter" to the effect of sunlight, cf. *Edward III*, I, ii, 141-142: "Let not thy presence like the April sun *Flatter* the earth."

4 *Gilding . . . alchemy*] Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, III, ii, 391-393: "the eastern gate, all fiery-red, Turns into yellow gold his [*i. e.*, Neptune's] salt green streams"; and *K. John*, III, i, 77-80: "the glorious sun . . . *plays the alchemist, Turning . . . the meagre cloddy earth to glittering gold.*"

5-7 *Anon permit . . . hide*] Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, ii, 190-192: "the sun Who doth permit the base contagious clouds To smother up his beauty from the world," and *Two Gent.*, I, iii, 85-87:

"The uncertain glory of an April day,
 Which now shows all the beauty of the sun,
 And by and by a cloud takes all away."

and xxxiv, 3-4, *infra*.

6 *rack*] wreath or bank of floating clouds.

12 *The region cloud*] The cloud of the upper air; cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, II, ii, 21: "the airy region" and *Hamlet*, II, ii, 574: "the region kites."

8

SONNETS

Yet him for this my love no whit disdaineth;
Suns of the world may stain when heaven's sun
staineth.

XXXIV

Why didst thou promise such a beauteous day,
And make me travel forth without my cloak,
To let base clouds o'ertake me in my way,
Hiding thy bravery in their rotten smoke?
'T is not enough that through the cloud thou break,
To dry the rain on my storm-beaten face,
For no man well of such a salve can speak
That heals the wound and cures not the disgrace:
Nor can thy shame give physic to my grief;
Though thou repent, yet I have still the loss: 10
The offender's sorrow lends but weak relief
To him that bears the strong offence's cross.
 Ah, but those tears are pearl which thy love sheds,
 And they are rich and ransom all ill deeds.

14 *stain . . . staineth*] dim . . . causeth dimness. Cf. *Rich. II*, III, iii, 65-67: "[The sun] perceives the envious clouds are bent To dim his glory and to *stain* the track." So xxxv, 3, *infra*.

xxxiv, 3-4 *let base clouds . . . rotten smoke*] See note on xxxiii, 5-7, *supra*.

4 *their rotten smoke*] "The base contagious clouds" in the passage from *I Hen. IV*, quoted above, are described as "foul and ugly mists of vapours." Cf. *Lucrece*, 778: "With *rotten* damp ravish the morning air."

12 *bears the strong offence's cross*] suffers damage from the great offence; *cross* is Malone's substitution for the original reading *loss*, which is a misprinted repetition of *loss*, the last word of line 10. "To bear a cross" is a common phrase. Cf. *As you like it*, II, iv, 10 and see *infra*, xlii, 12: "lay on me this *cross*."

SONNETS

XXXV

No more be grieved at that which thou hast done :
Roses have thorns, and silver fountains mud ;
Clouds and eclipses stain both moon and sun,
And loathsome canker lives in sweetest bud.
All men make faults, and even I in this,
Authorizing thy trespass with compare,
Myself corrupting, salving thy amiss,
Excusing thy sins more than thy sins are ;
For to thy sensual fault I bring in sense —
Thy adverse party is thy advocate — 10
And 'gainst myself a lawful plea commence :
Such civil war is in my love and hate,
That I an accessory needs must be
To that sweet thief which sourly robs from me.

xxxv, 4 *canker*] caterpillar. The allusion is common in Shakespeare's early works; see lxx, 7, and note, xc, 2, and xcix, 13.

6 *with compare*] with the similes cited from the conditions of nature. Cf. xxi, 5, *supra*.

7 *salving thy amiss*] palliating thy fault. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 53: "blames her 'miss," and cli, 3, *infra*.

8 *Excusing . . . thy sins are*] Making for thy sins the sort of excuse which is more sinful than thy sins themselves.

9-10 *For to thy sensual fault . . . thy advocate*] I appeal to good sense or reason ("thy adverse party") to act as advocate to palliate thy sensual offence.

12 *in my love and hate*] in my love of the sinner and hatred of his sin.

13-14 *an accessory . . . sweet thief*] Cf. *All's Well*, II, i, 34-35: "There's honour in the *theft*; . . . I am your *accessary*." Cf. also xl, 9, *infra*. Barnfield in his first sonnet to Ganymede, which embodies much legal terminology, has the lines: "There came a *thief* and stole away my heart, And therefore *robbed me of my chiefest part*."

SONNETS

XXXVI

Let me confess that we two must be twain,
Although our undivided loves are one:
So shall those blots that do with me remain,
Without thy help, by me be borne alone.
In our two loves there is but one respect,
Though in our lives a separable spite,
Which though it alter not love's sole effect,
Yet doth it steal sweet hours from love's delight.
I may not evermore acknowledge thee,
Lest my bewailed guilt should do thee shame, 10
Nor thou with public kindness honour me,
Unless thou take that honour from thy name:
 But do not so; I love thee in such sort,
 As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

XXXVII

As a decrepit father takes delight
To see his active child do deeds of youth,
So I, made lame by fortune's dearest spite,
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth;
For whether beauty, birth, or wealth, or wit,

XXXVI, 5 *one respect*] one regard or a single affection.

6 *a separable spite*] a severing, malignant fate; a cruel separation.

13-14 *But do not so; . . . good report*] This couplet is repeated at the end of *Sonnet xcvi*.

XXXVII, 3 *lame*] used in a figurative sense as in lxxxix, 3, *infra*. Cf.

Lear, IV, vi, 228 (Quarto): "A most poor man, *made lame by Fortune's blows*." (The Folio reads *made tame to*.)

dearest] desperate, extreme.

SONNETS

Or any of these all, or all, or more,
Entitled in thy parts do crowned sit,
I make my love engrafted to this store:
So then I am not lame, poor, nor despised,
Whilst that this shadow doth such substance give 10
That I in thy abundance am sufficed
And by a part of all thy glory live.
 Look, what is best, that best I wish in thee:
 This wish I have; then ten times happy me!

XXXVIII

How can my Muse want subject to invent,
While thou dost breathe, that pour'st into my verse
Thine own sweet argument, too excellent
For every vulgar paper to rehearse?
O, give thyself the thanks, if aught in me
Worthy perusal stand against thy sight;
For who's so dumb that cannot write to thee,
When thou thyself dost give invention light?

7 *Entitled in thy parts*] Probably "Ennobled in thee"; "deriving (titles of) honour from association with thy capacities." Cf. *Lucrece*, 57 (seenote): "in that white *intituled*," where the word has a more difficult technical significance. Elsewhere (cf. *L. L. L.*, V, ii, 800) "intituled in" means "having a just claim to." The Quarto here reads *their* for *thy*, a textual confusion of frequent occurrence; *their* is unintelligible.

xxxviii Cf., for like descriptions of the inspiration inherent in the friend's personal charm, *Sonnets* lxxxiii and ciii.

3 *Thine own sweet argument*] Theme of thine own sweet self. Cf. Spenser's sonnet to Raleigh (*Faerie Queene*, 1590): "Thou only fit this *argument* to write," and Barnes' *Parthenophil*, 1593, Sonnet lxxv: "*mine argument*." See lxxvi, 10 and lxxix, 5.

SONNETS

Be thou the tenth Muse, ten times more in worth
Than those old nine which rhymers invoke; 10
And he that calls on thee, let him bring forth
Eternal numbers to outlive long date.

If my slight Muse do please these curious days,
The pain be mine, but thine shall be the praise.

XXXIX

O, how thy worth with manners may I sing,
When thou art all the better part of me?
What can mine own praise to mine own self bring?
And what is 't but mine own when I praise thee?
Even for this let us divided live,
And our dear love lose name of single one,
That by this separation I may give
That due to thee which thou deservest alone.
O absence, what a torment wouldst thou prove,
Were it not thy sour leisure gave sweet leave 10

10 *those old nine which rhymers invoke*] Cf. Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnet iii: "Let dainty wits cry on *the Sisters nine*." See *infra*, lxxvi, 3-4.

13 *curious*] critical.

14 *The pain be mine . . . the praise*] So Daniel of his sonnets dedicated to the Countess of Pembroke (*Delia*, 1592): "Whereof the *travail* I may challenge *mine*; But yet the *glory*, Madam, must be *thine*."

XXXIX, 1 *with manners*] with decency or self-respect. Cf. lxxxv, 1.

2 *the better part of me*] my soul. See note on *Com. of Errors*, II, ii, 122: "thy self's *better part*," and cf. lxxiv, 8, *infra*. The phrase "the better part of me" is similarly used by Daniel (*Cleopatra*, 1594, dedicated to Countess of Pembroke) and by Ovid, *Metam.*, xv, *ad fin.* in Golding's translation of that passage whence the sonnets so frequently draw suggestions; see xv, *supra*, lv, lix, lxiii, lxiv, and cxxiii.

SONNETS

To entertain the time with thoughts of love,
Which time and thoughts so sweetly doth deceive,
And that thou teachest how to make one twain,
By praising him here who doth hence remain!

XL

Take all my loves, my love, yea, take them all;
What hast thou then more than thou hadst before?

- 11 *To entertain the time*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 1361: "The weary *time* she cannot entertain."
- 12 *Which time and thoughts . . . deceive*] Which doth beguile time and thoughts. Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 24: "*time-beguiling* sport."
- 13-14 *And that thou . . . doth hence remain*] An absent friend can be made two persons — one present in the imagination, and the other really far away. So *Ant. and Cleop.*, I, iii, 102-104: "Our separation so abides and flies, That thou residing here go'st yet with me, And I hence fleeting here remain with thee."
- x1 This and the following two sonnets associate themselves with *Sonnets* cxxxiii, cxxxiv, and cxliv, in all of which reference is made to the friend's intrigue with the poet's mistress. The rivalry here indicated in the poet's heart between friendship with a man and love for a woman is no uncommon theme of Renaissance poetry. Petrarch (*Sonnet* cexxvii) confesses to the double sentiment:

‘Carità di signore, amor di donna
Son le catene, ove con multi affanni
Legato son, perch'io stesso mi strinsi.’

Cf. Beza's *Poemata*, 1548, *Epigrammata*, xc: "De sua in Candidam et Audebertum benevolentia." Clement Marot in a poetic address: "A celle qui souhaita Marot aussi amoureux d'elle qu'un sien Amy" (*Œuvres*, 1565, p. 437), describing his solicitation in love of a friend's mistress, diagnoses a like conflict of emotions. The closest parallel to the Shakespearean situation (see esp. *Sonnet* xlii) is that described by Saint Evremond, who, complaining of a close friend's

SONNETS

No love, my love, that thou mayst true love call;
All mine was thine before thou hadst this more.
Then, if for my love thou my love receivest,
I cannot blame thee for my love thou usest;
But yet be blamed, if thou thyself deceivest
By wilful taste of what thyself refuseth.
I do forgive thy robbery, gentle thief,
Although thou steal thee all my poverty;
And yet, love knows, it is a greater grief
To bear love's wrong than hate's known injury.
Lascivious grace, in whom all ill well shows,
Kill me with spites; yet we must not be foes.

10

XLI

Those pretty wrongs that liberty commits,
When I am sometime absent from thy heart,
Thy beauty and thy years full well befits,
For still temptation follows where thou art.

guilty relations with his mistress (apparently la Comtesse d'Olonne), wrote thus to her in 1654 of his twofold affection: "Apprenez-moi contre qui je me dois fâcher d'avantage, ou contre lui qui m'enlève une maîtresse, ou contre vous, qui me volez un ami . . . J'ai trop de passion pour donner rien au ressentiment; ma tendresse l'importera toujours sur vos outrages. J'aime la perfide, j'aime l'infidèle." (*Œuvres Mêlées Saint Evremond*, ed. Giraud, 1865, iii, 5.)

5-6 *for my love . . . for my love*] for love of me . . . because my love [*i. e.*, my mistress].

8 *what thyself refuseth*] that lascivious indulgence which thou in reality disdainest.

9 *thy robbery, gentle thief*] Cf. xxxv, 13, *supra*.

13 *Lascivious grace . . . shows*] Cf. xcv, 12, *infra*.

XLI, 1 *liberty*] licentiousness.

SONNETS

Gentle thou art, and therefore to be won,
Beauteous thou art, therefore to be assailed;
And when a woman woos, what woman's son
Will sourly leave her till she have prevailed?
Ay me! but yet thou mightst my seat forbear,
And chide thy beauty and thy straying youth, 10
Who lead thee in their riot even there
Where thou art forced to break a twofold truth,
 Hers, by thy beauty tempting her to thee,
 Thine, by thy beauty being false to me.

XLII

That thou hast her, it is not all my grief,
And yet it may be said I loved her dearly;
That she hath thee, is of my wailing chief,
A loss in love that touches me more nearly.
Loving offenders, thus I will excuse ye:
Thou dost love her, because thou know'st I love her;
And for my sake even so doth she abuse me,
Suffering my friend for my sake to approve her.
If I lose thee, my loss is my love's gain,

5 *Gentle thou art . . . to be won*] Almost identical expressions figure in
1 *Hen. VI*, V, iii, 78-79; *Rich. III*, I, ii, 228-229; *Tit. And.*, II, i,
82-83. Cf. Greene's *Orpharion*, 1599 (Works, ed. Grosart, xii, p. 31):
"she is but a woman, and therefore *to be wonne*."

8 *till she have*] Malone's substitution of the Quarto *till he have*, which may
be right.

9 *my seat*] Cf. *Othello*, II, i, 289-290: "the lusty Moor Hath leap'd
into *my seat*." So *Lucrece*, 413: "this fair throne."

12 *a twofold truth*] the fidelity of both friend and mistress to the poet.

XLII, 7 *abuse*] ill use.

8 *to approve her*] to win her approval or affection.

SONNETS

And losing her, my friend hath found that loss; 10
Both find each other, and I lose both twain,
And both for my sake lay on me this cross:
 But here 's the joy; my friend and I are one;
 Sweet flattery! then she loves but me alone.

XLIII

When most I wink, then do mine eyes best see,
For all the day they view things unrespected;
But when I sleep, in dreams they look on thee,
And, darkly bright, are bright in dark directed.
Then thou, whose shadow shadows doth make bright,
How would thy shadow's form form happy show
To the clear day with thy much clearer light,
When to unseeing eyes thy shade shines so!
How would, I say, mine eyes be blessed made
By looking on thee in the living day, 10
When in dead night thy fair imperfect shade
Through heavy sleep on sightless eyes doth stay!
 All days are nights to see till I see thee,
 And nights bright days when dreams do show thee
 me.

11 *both twain*] A reduplication only found elsewhere in *L. L. L.*, V, ii, 459.
13-14 *my friend and I are one . . . but me alone*] Cf. cxxxv, 14: "Think
all but *one*, and me in that *one Will*."

XLIII This sonnet was omitted from Shakespeare's "Poems" of 1640. Its
theme resembles that of xxvii and lxi.

1 *wink*] shut the eyes; a common usage. Cf. lvi, 6.

2 *unrespected*] without taking particular notice, unnoticeable.

4 *are bright in dark directed*] are guided in the dark by the brightness (of
thy "shadow" or apparition).

5 *whose shadow*] Cf. xxvii, 10: "thy *shadow*," and note, and lxi, 1 *seq*.

SONNETS

XLIV

If the dull substance of my flesh were thought,
Injurious distance should not stop my way;
For then, despite of space, I would be brought,
From limits far remote, where thou dost stay.
No matter then although my foot did stand
Upon the farthest earth removed from thee;
For nimble thought can jump both sea and land,
As soon as think the place where he would be.
But, ah, thought kills me, that I am not thought, 10
To leap large lengths of miles when thou art gone,
But that, so much of earth and water wrought,
I must attend time's leisure with my moan;
 Receiving nought by elements so slow
 But heavy tears, badges of either's woe.

XLV

The other two, slight air and purging fire,
Are both with thee, wherever I abide;

XLIV, 7-8 *For nimble thought . . . he would be*] Sonnets dealing in like manner with thought's triumph over space are very common in Renaissance poetry. Cf. Ronsard, *Amours*, I, clxviii: "Ce fol penser, pour s'envoler trop haut"; Du Bellay's *Olive*, xliii: "Penser volage, et leger comme vent"; Amadis Jamyn, Sonnet xxi: "Penser, qui peut en un moment grande erre Courir"; and Tasso's *Rime* (1583, Venice, i, p. 33): "Come s' human pensier di giunger tenta Al luogo."

9 *thought*] care or anxiety.

XLV, 1 *The other two . . . fire*] Air and fire, making up with "earth and water" (already mentioned, xlv, 11) the four elements, constitute all life and nature. Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, bk. vii, canto i,

SONNETS

The first my thought, the other my desire,
These present-absent with swift motion slide.
For when these quicker elements are gone
In tender embassy of love to thee,
My life, being made of four, with two alone
Sinks down to death, oppress'd with melancholy;
Until life's composition be recured
By those swift messengers return'd from thee, 10
Who even but now come back again, assured
Of thy fair health, recounting it to me:
 This told, I joy; but then no longer glad,
 I send them back again, and straight grow sad.

XLVI

Mine eye and heart are at a mortal war,
How to divide the conquest of thy sight;

st. 24-25 and *Amoretti*, Sonnet lv, and Barnes' *Parthenophil* (1593), Sonnet lxxvii. This popular natural philosophy was universally accepted (cf. *Tw. Night*, II, iii, 9: "Does not *our life* consist of the *four elements*?"). Here Shakespeare probably drew directly upon the philosophic reflections which close Ovid's *Metam.* (bk. xv). Of the "four substances of which all things are gendred . . ." wrote Ovid, according to Golding's translation (ed. 1612, p. 186 *a* and *b*). "The *earth and water* for their masses and weight are sunken lower, The other couple *ayre and fire*, the purer of the twaine, Mount up and nought can keepe them downe." See also xv, xxxix, lv, lix, lxiii, lxiv, and cxxiii.

5 *these quicker elements*] Cf. *Hen. V*, III, vii, 21-22: "he is pure *air and fire*, and the *dull elements of earth and water* never appear in him," and *Ant. and Cleop.*, V, ii, 287-288: "I am *fire and air*; my other elements I give to baser life." So Drayton's eulogy of Marlowe: "his raptures were all *air and fire*."

XLVI, 1 *Mine eye and heart . . . war*] The war between the eye and the

SONNETS

Mine eye my heart thy picture's sight would bar,
My heart mine eye the freedom of that right.
My heart doth plead that thou in him dost lie,
A closet never pierced with crystal eyes,
But the defendant doth that plea deny,
And says in him thy fair appearance lies.
To 'cide this title is impanneled
A quest of thoughts, all tenants to the heart; 10
And by their verdict is determined
The clear eye's moiety and the dear heart's part:
 As thus; mine eye's due is thine outward part,
 And my heart's right thine inward love of heart.

heart is a favourite topic among Renaissance sonneteers, the cue being given them by their master Petrarch, whose Sonnet lv is a dialogue between the poet and his eyes, and Sonnet xcix is a companion dialogue between the poet and his heart. Ronsard treats the conceit in an ode (bk. iv, ode 20). Among English versions contemporary with Shakespeare the most familiar are Watson's *Tears of Fancie* (1593), xix and xx, a pair of sonnets closely resembling Shakespeare's *Sonnets* xlv and xlvii, Drayton's *Idea*, xxiii, Barnes' *Parthenophil*, xx, and Constable's *Diana*, Decade vi, Sonnet vii.

9-10 *impanneled A quest*] a empanelled jury. The legal terminology of this sonnet is common in Spenser, Barnes, Barnfield, and many other writers of the day. Cf. the *Faerie Queene*, bk. vi, vii, 34: "Therefore a *jurie* was *impaneled* streight."
tenants] Barnes in *Parthenophil* (1593) who constantly uses legal language opens his Sonnet xx thus:

"These eyes (thy Beauty's *Tenants*) pay due tears
For occupation of mine *heart*, thy freehold,
In tenure of Love's service."

See lxxxvii, 3 *seq.*, and note.

12 *moiety*] part; not necessarily "half." Cf. Shakespeare's dedication to Southampton in *Lucrece*: "this pamphlet is but a superfluous *moiety*."

SONNETS

XLVII

Betwixt mine eye and heart a league is took,
And each doth good turns now unto the other:
When that mine eye is famish'd for a look,
Or heart in love with sighs himself doth smother,
With my love's picture then my eye doth feast
And to the painted banquet bids my heart;
Another time mine eye is my heart's guest
And in his thoughts of love doth share a part:
So, either by thy picture or my love,
Thyself away art present still with me; 10
For thou not farther than my thoughts canst move,
And I am still with them and they with thee;
Or, if they sleep, thy picture in my sight
Awakes my heart to heart's and eye's delight.

XLVIII

How careful was I, when I took my way,
Each trifle under truest bars to thrust,
That to my use it might unused stay
From hands of falsehood, in sure wards of trust!

XLVII, 3-6 *When that mine eye . . . bids my heart*] This passage clearly suggested the lines (V, i, 18-22) in Suckling's *Tragedy of Brennoralt*:

“Will you not send me neither
Your picture when y' are gone?
That when my eye is famisht for a looke,
It may have where to feed,
And to the painted Feast invite my heart.”

For “famish'd for a look,” cf. *Com. of Errors*, II, i, 88: “starve for a merry look,” and lxxv, 10, *infra*.

10-12 *Thyself away . . . they with thee*] Cf. xxxix, 13-14 and the illustrative quotation there cited from *Ant. and Cleop.*, I, iii, 102-104.

SONNETS

But thou, to whom my jewels trifles are,
Most worthy comfort, now my greatest grief,
Thou, best of dearest and mine only care,
Art left the prey of every vulgar thief.
Thee have I not lock'd up in any chest,
Save where thou art not, though I feel thou art, 10
Within the gentle closure of my breast,
From whence at pleasure thou mayst come and part;
 And even thence thou wilt be stol'n, I fear,
 For truth proves thievish for a prize so dear.

XLIX

Against that time, if ever that time come,
When I shall see thee frown on my defects,
When as thy love hath cast his utmost sum,
Call'd to that audit by advised respects;
Against that time when thou shalt strangely pass,
And scarcely greet me with that sun, thine eye,
When love, converted from the thing it was,
Shall reasons find of settled gravity;

XLVIII, 11 *Within the gentle closure of my breast*] Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 782: "Into the quiet closure of my breast," and *Rich. III*, III, iii, 11: "Within the guilty closure of thy walls."

14 *For truth . . . prize so dear*] Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 724: "Rich preys make true men thieves."

XLIX The sonnet closely resembles *Sonnet lxxxviii*.

4 *by advised respects*] for well-considered reasons; so *K. John*, IV, ii, 214: "advised respect."

5 *strangely*] like a stranger; so *cx*, 6. Cf. *lxxxix*, 8.

7-8 *When love, converted . . . settled gravity*] Cf. *Jul. Cæs.*, IV, ii, 20-21: "When love begins to sicken and decay, It useth an enforced ceremony."

SONNETS

Against that time do I ensconce me here
Within the knowledge of mine own desert, 10
And this my hand against myself uprear,
To guard the lawful reasons on thy part:
 To leave poor me thou hast the strength of laws,
 Since why to love I can allege no cause.

L

How heavy do I journey on the way,
When what I seek, my weary travel's end,
Doth teach that ease and that repose to say,
"Thus far the miles are measured from thy friend!"
The beast that bears me, tired with my woe,
Plods dully on, to bear that weight in me,
As if by some instinct the wretch did know
His rider loved not speed, being made from thee:
The bloody spur cannot provoke him on 10
That sometimes anger thrusts into his hide;
Which heavily he answers with a groan,
More sharp to me than spurring to his side;
 For that same groan doth put this in my mind;
 My grief lies onward, and my joy behind.

9 *ensconce*] seclude or protect or fortify.

10 *desert*] lack of desert, demerit. Cf. lxxxviii, 5: "with mine own weakness being best acquainted."

11 *this my hand . . . uprear*] Cf. lxxxix, 13 and cxlix, 2: "When I against myself with thee partake."

12 *on thy part*] on thy side. Cf. lxxxviii, 6, *infra*.

L This and the next sonnet are run together in the "Poems" of 1640 under the single heading, "Goe and come quickly." They develop the theme of travel already noticed in *Sonnets* xxvii and xxviii.

SONNETS

LI

Thus can my love excuse the slow offence
Of my dull bearer when from thee I speed:
From where thou art why should I haste me thence?
Till I return, of posting is no need.
O, what excuse will my poor beast then find,
When swift extremity can seem but slow?
Then should I spur, though mounted on the wind,
In winged speed no motion shall I know:
Then can no horse with my desire keep pace;
Therefore desire, of perfect'st love being made, 10
Shall neigh — no dull flesh — in his fiery race;
But love, for love, thus shall excuse my jade;
 Since from thee going he went wilful-slow,
 Towards thee I'll run and give him leave to go.

LII

So am I as the rich, whose blessed key
Can bring him to his sweet up-locked treasure,
The which he will not every hour survey,

LI, 1 *slow offence*] offence of slowness.

6 *swift extremity*] the extreme of swiftness.

7 *mounted on the wind*] Cf. *As you like it*, III, ii, 80: "Her worth being mounted on the wind," and *2 Hen. IV*, Induction, 4: "Making the wind my post-horse."

11 *Shall neigh . . . fiery race*] Desire, which is all spirit and no dull flesh, shall neigh in the excitement of its impassioned flight (which altogether outdistances the pace of the horse). Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 307 (of the stallion): "He looks upon his love, and neighs unto her."

14 *to go*] to walk; a common usage. Cf. cxxx, 11.

SONNETS

For blunting the fine point of seldom pleasure.
Therefore are feasts so solemn and so rare,
Since, seldom coming, in the long year set,
Like stones of worth they thinly placed are,
Or captain jewels in the carcanet.
So is the time that keeps you as my chest,
Or as the wardrobe which the robe doth hide, 10
To make some special instant special blest,
By new unfolding his imprison'd pride.
 Blessed are you, whose worthiness gives scope,
 Being had, to triumph, being lack'd, to hope.

LIII

What is your substance, whereof are you made,
That millions of strange shadows on you tend?

LII, 4 *For blunting*] For fear of blunting. For the sentiment cf. cii, 12:
"And sweets grown common lose their dear delight."

5-7 *Therefore are feasts . . . thinly placed are*] Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, ii, 197-199: "If all the year were playing holidays, To sport would be as tedious as to work; But when they seldom come they wish'd for come." So Montaigne's *Essays* "On Inequality" (bk. i, ch. xlii): "Feasts rejoyce them that but seldome see them . . . ; the taste of which becometh cloysome."

8 *captain jewels*] the principal jewels in a necklace.

carcanet] only used elsewhere by Shakespeare in *Com. of Errors*, III, i, 4. It is formed from the French "carcan," a necklace.

13-14 *Blessed are you . . . to hope*] Blessed are you whose excellence is such that your presence brings me triumph, your absence fills me with the hope of a meeting.

LIII, 1-12 *What is your substance . . . shape we know*] The common notion that every beautiful aspect of nature reflects or borrows attributes of the beloved one's form (cf. xcix, *infra*) is here subtilised into the complementary fancy that the beloved one's form has in

SONNETS

Since every one hath, every one, one shade,
And you, but one, can every shadow lend.
Describe Adonis, and the counterfeit
Is poorly imitated after you;
On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set,
And you in Grecian tires are painted new:
Speak of the spring and foison of the year,
The one doth shadow of your beauty show, 10
The other as your bounty doth appear;
And you in every blessed shape we know.
In all external grace you have some part,
But you like none, none you, for constant heart.

LIV

O, how much more doth beauty beauteous seem
By that sweet ornament which truth doth give!
The rose looks fair, but fairer we it deem
For that sweet odour which doth in it live.
The canker-blooms have full as deep a dye

attendance and at command the forms or essences of all nature's manifestations. This fancy is more directly and simply presented at cxiii, 5, *infra*, where Petrarch's less subtle treatment of the topic is followed (see note).

2 *strange shadows*] shadows or images of independent entities.

5-6 *Describe Adonis . . . after you*] So Barnfield's Sonnets to Ganymede, xvii: "Cherry-lipt *Adonis* in his snowie shape Might not *compare* with his [*i. e.*, Ganymede's] pure iuorie white."

8 *tires*] attires, dress. "Tires" is elsewhere used for "headdresses."

9 *foison*] harvest. A French word thrice used by Shakespeare elsewhere.

Cf. *Tempest*, II, i, 157; IV, i, 110; *Macb.*, IV, iii, 88.

LIV, 5 *canker-blooms*] blossoms of the wild dog-rose, commonly called "canker-rose."

SONNETS

As the perfumed tincture of the roses,
Hang on such thorns, and play as wantonly
When summer's breath their masked buds discloses:
But, for their virtue only is their show,
They live unwoo'd and unrespected fade; 10
Die to themselves. Sweet roses do not so;
Of their sweet deaths are sweetest odours made:
And so of you, beauteous and lovely youth,
When that shall vade, by verse distills your truth.

LV

Not marble, nor the gilded monuments
Of princes, shall outlive this powerful rhyme;
But you shall shine more bright in these contents
Than unswept stone, besmear'd with sluttish time.
When wasteful war shall statues overturn,
And broils root out the work of masonry,

8 *their masked buds discloses*] Cf. *Hamlet*, I, iii, 39-40: "the infants of the spring . . . before their buttons [*i. e.*, buds] be disclosed."

9 *show*] outward appearance. Cf. xciii, 14, *infra*.

11 *Die to themselves*] Cf. xciv, 10: "Though to itself it only . . . die."

13-14 *And so of you . . . distills your truth*] Cf. v, 9, *supra*, and note.

14 *When that shall vade*] When beauty of youth shall *fade*; "vade" is an original form of "fade." Cf. *Pass. Pilg.*, xiii, 2, 6, 8.

by verse] the original reading for which Malone substituted *my verse*.

LV, 1 *Not marble, etc.*] An echo of Horace's "Exegi monumentum aere perennius," but mainly an adaptation (see esp. ii, 7-8), of Ovid's claim to immortality in his *Metam.*, xv, *ad fin.* From lines preceding this passage in Golding's familiar translation of Ovid Shakespeare clearly borrowed most of his philosophic reflections and illustrations in the sonnets; see xv, lix, lx, lxiii, lxiv, and cxxiii.

SONNETS

Nor Mars his sword nor war's quick fire shall burn
The living record of your memory.
'Gainst death and all-oblivious enmity
Shall you pace forth; your praise shall still find room 10
Even in the eyes of all posterity
That wear this world out to the ending doom.
So, till the judgement that yourself arise,
You live in this, and dwell in lovers' eyes.

LVI

Sweet love, renew thy force; be it not said
Thy edge should blunter be than appetite,
Which but to-day by feeding is allay'd,
To-morrow sharpen'd in his former might:
So, love, be thou; although to-day thou fill
Thy hungry eyes even till they wink with fulness,
To-morrow see again, and do not kill
The spirit of love with a perpetual dulness.

7 *Nor Mars . . . shall burn*] Cf. Ovid's *Metam.*, translated by Golding,
bk. xv, *ad fin.*:

“Now have I brought a worke to end which neither Ioue's fierce wrath
Nor sword nor fire nor freating age with all the force it hath
Are able to abolish quight, etc.”

9 *all-oblivious enmity*] enmity which causes oblivion.

12 *wear this world out*] Cf. *Lear*, IV, vi, 134-135: “This great world
Shall so *wear out* to nought.”

13 *So, till . . . yourself arise*] Till the judgment day when you shall arise
from the tomb.

LVI This sonnet was omitted from Shakespeare's “Poems” of 1640.

6 *wink*] close, shut. Cf. xliii, 1.

SONNETS

Let this sad interim like the ocean be
Which parts the shore, where two contracted new 10
Come daily to the banks, that, when they see
Return of love, more blest may be the view;
 Or call it winter, which, being full of care,
 Makes summer's welcome thrice more wish'd, more
 rare.

LVII

Being your slave, what should I do but tend
Upon the hours and times of your desire?
I have no precious time at all to spend,
Nor services to do, till you require.
Nor dare I chide world-without-end hour
Whilst I, my sovereign, watch the clock for you,
Nor think the bitterness of absence sour
When you have bid your servant once adieu;
Nor dare I question with my jealous thought
Where you may be, or your affairs suppose, 10
But, like a sad slave, stay and think of nought
Save, where you are how happy you make those.

10 *two contracted new*] two newly betrothed lovers.

11 *the banks*] the shores.

13 *Or*] Thus Malone. The Quarto reads *As*.

LVII, 5 *world-without-end hour*] the endless or never-ending hour. Cf.

L. L. L., V, ii, 777: "a *world-without-end* bargain."

12 *where you are . . . make those*] how happy you make those where you are.

SONNETS

So true a fool is love that in your will,
Though you do any thing, he thinks no ill.

LVIII

That god forbid that made me first your slave,
I should in thought control your times of pleasure,
Or at your hand the account of hours to crave,
Being your vassal, bound to stay your leisure!
O, let me suffer, being at your beck,
The imprison'd absence of your liberty;
And patience, tame to sufferance, bide each check,
Without accusing you of injury.
Be where you list, your charter is so strong
That you yourself may privilege your time
To what you will; to you it doth belong
Yourself to pardon of self-doing crime.

10

I am to wait, though waiting so be hell,
Not blame your pleasure, be it ill or well.

13 *in your will*] whatever your will or pleasure. In the Quarto *will*, although not italicised, is spelt with a capital *W*, as was the usual practice at the time in the case of this and like words in poetry, *e. g.*, Nature, Truth, Wit, Zeal, Soul. A doubtful endeavour has been made to detect in the word here a tame pun on the poet's Christian name, *i. e.*, in case of your Will, or William. See cxxi, 8: "*in their wills*," and cxxxv and cxxxvi *passim* with the notes.

LVIII, 6 *The imprison'd . . . liberty*] The absence which means liberty to you and to me the confinement of a prison.

7 *tame to sufferance*] complaisant in suffering. Cf. *K. John*, IV, ii, 262: "*tame to their obedience*."

9 *charter*] Cf. lxxxvii, 3, *infra*.

SONNETS

LIX

If there be nothing new, but that which is
Hath been before, how are our brains beguiled,
Which, labouring for invention, bear amiss
The second burthen of a former child!
O, that record could with a backward look,
Even of five hundred courses of the sun,
Show me your image in some antique book,
Since mind at first in character was done.
That I might see what the old world could say
To this composed wonder of your frame; 10
Whether we are mended, or whether better they,
Or whether revolution be the same.

LIX, 1-4 *If there be nothing . . . former child*] These lines again develop Ovid's philosophy at the close of the *Metam.* Cf. Golding's translation (1612 ed. p. 186 b): "All things do change but nothing sure doth perish . . . The soul is aye the selfsame thing it was . . . Neither doth there perish aught in all the world, but altering takes new shape . . . Things pass perchance from place to place, yet all from whence they came Returning do unperished continue still the same." See also xv, lxiii, and lxiv, and see cxxiii, 4, and note.

6 *courses of the sun*] years. So *Othello*, III, iv, 71: "The sun to course two hundred compasses," and *Hen. VIII*, II, iii, 5-6: "after So many courses of the sun."

7 *some antique book*] Cf. cvi, 7: "their antique pen."

8 *Since mind . . . was done*] Since thought was first expressed in handwriting.

11 *Whether . . . whether*] The word is here a monosyllable. In the next line it is a dissyllable.

12 *Whether . . . be the same*] whether revolving time produce recurrence of the same effects; whether the present and future be a mere return or reproduction of a past cycle; cf. cxxiii, 4, and note.

SONNETS

O, sure I am, the wits of former days
To subjects worse have given admiring praise.

LX

Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
So do our minutes hasten to their end;
Each changing place with that which goes before,
In sequent toil all forwards do contend.
Nativity, once in the main of light,
Crawls to maturity, wherewith being crown'd,
Crooked eclipses 'gainst his glory fight,
And Time that gave doth now his gift confound.
Time doth transfix the flourish set on youth
And delves the parallels in beauty's brow,
Feeds on the rarities of nature's truth,

10

LX, 1-4 Like as the waves . . . do contend] For further examination of Ovid's description of Nature's ebb and flow in *Metam.*, xv, cf. Golding's transl. (ed. 1612, p. 185 b): "As every wave drives others forth and that that comes behind Both thrusteth and is thrust itself; even so the tymes by kind Do flee and follow both at once and evermore renew."

5 the main of light] the full expanse of light; so "main" is commonly used of the great expanse of sea. Ovid (*Metam.*, xv, Golding's transl., ed. 1612, p. 186 a) describes "Dame Nature" as bringing man out from the womb "[in] to ayre," for him to pass "forth the space of youth," to wear "out his middle age apace," and finally to have his strength "undermined" by age and to be consumed "every whit" by "lingering death."

7 Crooked] Malignant, ill-omened.

8 confound] destroy.

9 flourish] ornament. Cf. *Hamlet*, II, ii, 91: "outward flourishes."

10 parallels] lines. Cf. ii, 2: "dig deep trenches in thy beauty's field," and xix, 9-10. See also *Troil. and Cress.*, I, iii, 168.

SONNETS

Methinks no face so gracious is as mine,
No shape so true, no truth of such account;
And for myself mine own worth do define,
As I all other in all worths surmount.
But when my glass shows me myself indeed,
Beated and chopp'd with tann'd antiquity,
Mine own self-love quite contrary I read;
Self so self-loving were iniquity.

10

'T is thee, myself, that for myself I praise,
Painting my age with beauty of thy days.

LXIII

Against my love shall be, as I am now,
With Time's injurious hand crush'd and o'erworn;
When hours have drain'd his blood and fill'd his brow
With lines and wrinkles; when his youthful morn

LXII, 6 *No shape so true*] Cf. *Lear*, I, ii, 8: "my *shape* as *true*."

9-10 *But when my glass . . . antiquity*] See note on xxii, 1, *supra*.

10 *Beated and chopp'd*] Pared (or rubbed away) and chapped (or wrinkled).

Cf. *2 Hen. IV*, III, ii, 267: "a little, lean, old, *chapt*, bald shot" (see note there). "Beated" is still used as in the context in provincial dialects.

12 *self-loving were iniquity*] Cf. *All 's Well*, I, i, 136-137: "*self-love* which is the most inhibited sin in the canon."

13 *'T is thee . . . praise*] It is thee who art identical with myself, whom I praise as if I were praising myself.

14 *Painting my age . . . days*] Cf. *L. L. L.*, IV, iii, 240: "*Beauty* doth *varnish* age as if new-born."

LXIII, 1 *Against*] Against that time when; as in xlix, 1-2.

2 *o'erworn*] Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 135: "*O'erworn*, despised," etc., and lxiv, 2: "out-worn."

SONNETS

Hath travell'd on to age's steepy night,
And all those beauties whereof now he's king
Are vanishing or vanish'd out of sight,
Stealing away the treasure of his spring;
For such a time do I now fortify
Against confounding age's cruel knife,
That he shall never cut from memory
My sweet love's beauty, though my lover's life:
His beauty shall in these black lines be seen,
And they shall live, and he in them still green.

10

LXIV

When I have seen by Time's fell hand defaced
The rich-proud cost of outworn buried age;
When sometime lofty towers I see down-razed,

5 *age's steepy night*] the steep declining path of old age to the night of death. The phrase is yet another reminiscence of Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metam.* bk. xv (1612 ed., p. 186 a): "Through drooping *age's steepy path* he [*i. e.*, man] runneth out his race" (after passing "forth the space of youth," etc.). Cf. xv, lix, lx, lxiv, cxxiii for other allusions to the same passage in Ovid. "Steepy" is only found elsewhere in Shakespeare in *Tim. of Ath.*, I, i, 78: "the *steepy* mount." "Steepy mountains" is read in the *England's Helicon* version of Marlowe's "Come live with me and be my love" (line 4), the *Pass. Pilgrim* version reads "craggy mountains" (xx, 4).

9-10 *I now fortify . . . cruel knife*] Cf. Daniel's *Delia*, Sonnet 1: "These are the arks the trophies I erect that *fortify* thy name *against* old age." Cf. for "fortify" xvi, 3, *supra*.

13 *black lines*] Cf. lxx, 14: "black ink."

LXIV, 2 *rich-proud cost . . . age*] the costly and proud splendour of the dead and buried past. Cf. *Lucrece*, 1350: "the *worn-out age*," and *supra*, lxxiii, 2: "o'erworn." See also lxxviii, 1: "days *outworn*."

SONNETS

And brass eternal slave to mortal rage;
When I have seen the hungry ocean gain
Advantage on the kingdom of the shore,
And the firm soil win of the watery main,
Increasing store with loss and loss with store;
When I have seen such interchange of state,
Or state itself confounded to decay; 10
Ruin hath taught me thus to ruminat,
That Time will come and take my love away.
This thought is as a death, which cannot choose
But weep to have that which it fears to lose.

LXV

Since brass, nor stone, nor earth, nor boundless sea,
But sad mortality o'er-sways their power,
How with this rage shall beauty hold a plea,
Whose action is no stronger than a flower?
O, how shall summer's honey breath hold out
Against the wreckful siege of battering days,

5-10 *When I have seen . . . to decay*] Such revolution of nature, as the encroachment of land and sea one upon the other, is again noticed in *2 Hen. IV*, III, i, 45-51. The illustration is one more of Shakespeare's many echoes in the sonnets of the philosophic disquisition in Ovid's *Metam.*, xv (cf. Golding's transl., 1612 ed., p. 186 b):

"Even so haue places often-times *exchanged their estate*,
For *I have seene* it sea which was substantiall ground alate.
Againe where sea was, *I have seene* the same become dry land."

Cf. cxxiii, 4, *infra*, and note.

13-14 *This thought . . . weep to have*] "Thought" is the subject of the relative "which"; "weep to have" means "weep at having."

SONNETS

When rocks impregnable are not so stout,
Nor gates of steel so strong, but Time decays?
O fearful meditation! where, alack,
Shall Time's best jewel from Time's chest lie hid? 10
Or what strong hand can hold his swift foot back?
Or who his spoil of beauty can forbid?
O, none, unless this miracle have might,
That in black ink my love may still shine bright.

LXVI

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry,
As, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority, 10
And folly, doctor-like, controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
And captive good attending captain ill:

LXV, 10 *Time's best jewel . . . chest*] The best jewel that ever came from Time's chest. Cf. lli, 8-9, *supra*: "So is *the time* that keeps you as my *chest*," etc.

14 *black ink*] Cf. lxiii, 13: "black lines."

LXVI For the pessimistic sentiment see note on xxix, *supra*. Cf. *Lucrece*, 902-912, and *Hamlet*, III, i, 70-74.

1 *with all these*] with all the ills which follow.

11 *simplicity*] folly, stupidity.

SONNETS

Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

LXVII

Ah, wherefore with infection should he live
And with his presence grace impiety,
That sin by him advantage should achieve
And lace itself with his society?
Why should false painting imitate his cheek,
And steal dead seeing of his living hue?
Why should poor beauty indirectly seek
Roses of shadow, since his rose is true?
Why should he live, now Nature bankrupt is,
Beggar'd of blood to blush through lively veins? 10
For she hath no exchequer now but his,
And, proud of many, lives upon his gains.
O, him she stores, to show what wealth she had
In days long since, before these last so bad.

LXVIII

Thus is his cheek the map of days outworn,
When beauty lived and died as flowers do now,

LXVII Cf. cxxvii, *infra*, for a like lament on the degeneracy of the age.

4 *lace itself*] adorn or ornament itself; no uncommon usage.

6 *dead seeing*] a lifeless semblance or aspect of beauty. *Seeing* may be right, but *seeming*, *i. e.*, appearance, is substituted by Capell.

7 *poor beauty indirectly seek*] defective beauty falsely or wrongfully seek.

LXVIII, 1 *map of days outworn*] picture of the past. So *Lucrece*, 402: "map of death," and 1350: "pattern of the worn-out age." Cf. lxiv, 2, *supra*, and note.

SONNETS

Before these bastard signs of fair were born,
Or durst inhabit on a living brow;
Before the golden tresses of the dead,
The right of sepulchres, were shorn away,
To live a second life on second head;
Ere beauty's dead fleece made another gay:
In him those holy antique hours are seen,
Without all ornament, itself and true, 10
Making no summer of another's green,
Robbing no old to dress his beauty new;
 And him as for a map doth Nature store,
 To show false Art what beauty was of yore.

LXIX

Those parts of thee that the world's eye doth view
Want nothing that the thought of hearts can mend;
All tongues, the voice of souls, give thee that due,

3 *fair*] beauty. For the substantive use cf. *Com. of Errors*, II, i, 98; xvi, 11, *supra*; and lxxxiii, 2, *infra*.

5-7 *Before the golden tresses . . . second head*] Shakespeare repeatedly denounces the practice of wearing false hair which was often shorn off the scalps of the dead. Cf. *Merch. of Ven.*, III, ii, 95-96: "the dowry of a *second head*, The skull that bred them in the sepulchre." So also *L. L. L.*, IV, iii, 255 and *Hen. V*, III, vii, 60. The practice is fully exposed in Stubbe's *Anatomie of Abuses* (New Shaksp. Soc., I, 68, 258). The satirist Goddard in his *Satirycall Dialogue* (1615, sig. 13 b) deprecates "the curl'd worne *tresses of dead borrowed haire*."

13-14 *And him . . . was of yore*] a variation on the concluding couplet of *Sonnet lxxvii*.

LXIX, 2-3 *the thought of hearts . . . tongues, the voice of souls*] Twice in

SONNETS

Uttering bare truth, even so as foes commend.
Thy outward thus with outward praise is crown'd;
But those same tongues, that give thee so thine own,
In other accents do this praise confound
By seeing farther than the eye hath shown.
They look into the beauty of thy mind,
And that, in guess, they measure by thy deeds; 10.
Then, churls, their thoughts, although their eyes were
 kind,
To thy fair flower add the rank smell of weeds:
 But why thy odour matcheth not thy show,
 The soil is this, that thou dost common grow.

LXX

That thou art blamed shall not be thy defect,
For slander's mark was ever yet the fair;

his early work, *Venus and Adonis*, 367, and *Tit. Andr.*, III, i, 82, Shakespeare gives the tongue a cognate designation: "the engine of (her) thoughts."

that due] Malone's just correction of the original reading *that end*.

5 *Thy outward*] Thy external shape.

12 *To thy fair flower . . . of weeds*] Cf. xciv, 14, *infra*: "Lilies that fester smell far worse than *weeds*," and note.

14 *soil*] defect or blemish. The Cambridge editors' correction of the original reading *solye*, which is altered to *soyle* in the "Poems" of 1640. Malone read *solve*, *i. e.*, solution. "Soil" as a verb is occasionally found in much the same sense as "solve" and might possibly, but not probably, be used here for "solution or explanation."

LXX, 2 *slander's mark . . . fair*] Cf. Marlowe's *Hero and Leander*, Sestiad I, 285-286: "Whose name is it, if she be false or not, So she be *fair*, but some vile tongues will blot?"

SONNETS

The ornament of beauty is suspect,
A crow that flies in heaven's sweetest air.
So thou be good, slander doth but approve
Thy worth the greater, being woo'd of time;
For canker vice the sweetest buds doth love,
And thou present'st a pure unstained prime.
Thou hast pass'd by the ambush of young days,
Either not assail'd, or victor being charged; 10
Yet this thy praise cannot be so thy praise,
To tie up envy evermore enlarged:
 If some suspect of ill mask'd not thy show,
 Then thou alone kingdoms of hearts shouldst owe.

LXXI

No longer mourn for me when I am dead
Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
Give warning to the world that I am fled
From this vile world, with vilest worms to dwell:
Nay, if you read this line, remember not
The hand that writ it; for I love you so,
That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
If thinking on me then should make you woe.

3 *suspect*] suspicion; so line 13, *infra*.

6 *being woo'd of time*] being wooed by the temptations either of the season of youth or of the present age.

7 *For canker vice . . . doth love*] So *Venus and Adonis*, 656: "This *canker* that eats up Love's tender spring"; and *Two Gent.*, I, i, 42-44: "Yet writers say, as in the sweetest bud, The eating canker dwells, so eating love Inhabits in the finest wits of all." Cf. xxxv, 4, *supra*: "Loathsome *canker* lives in *sweetest bud*."

LXXI, 2 *surly sullen bell*] Cf. 2 *Hen. IV*, I, i, 102: "a *sullen bell* . . . tolling a departed friend."

SONNETS

O, if, I say, you look upon this verse
When I perhaps compounded am with clay, 10
Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
But let your love even with my life decay;
Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
And mock you with me after I am gone.

LXXII

O, lest the world should task you to recite
What merit lived in me, that you should love
After my death, dear love, forget me quite,
For you in me can nothing worthy prove;
Unless you would devise some virtuous lie,
To do more for me than mine own desert,
And hang more praise upon deceased I
Than niggard truth would willingly impart:
O, lest your true love may seem false in this, 10
That you for love speak well of me untrue,
My name be buried where my body is,
And live no more to shame nor me nor you.
For I am shamed by that which I bring forth,
And so should you, to love things nothing worth.

10 *compounded . . . with clay*] Cf. 2 *Hen. IV*, IV, v, 116: "compound me with forgotten dust."

LXXII, 5 *some virtuous lie*] Webster in the *Duchess of Malfi*, III, ii, 219, assigns to Tasso the familiar phrase "magnanima menzogna" (*Gierusalemme Liberata*, Bk. II, Canto 22) which Fairfax translates "a noble lie." Tasso's phrase, which became proverbial, is related to the *γενναῖον ψεῦδος* of Plato and the "splendide mendax" of Horace.

SONNETS

LXXIII

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west;
Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire,
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie, 10
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourish'd by.

 This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more
 strong,
 To love that well which thou must leave ere long.

LXXIII, 1-3 *That time of year . . . the cold*] See note on xxii, 1, *supra*. The same figure of a tree stript bare is applied to old age in *Cymb.*, III, iii, 60-64, and *Tim. of Ath.*, IV, iii, 263 *seq.* Cf. *Mach.*, V, iii, 22-23: "my way of life Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf."

7 *Which . . . take away*] Cf. *Two Gent.*, I, iii, 85-87: "day Which now shows all the beauty of the sun And by and by a cloud takes all away."

8 *Death's second self*] Cf. Daniel's *Delia*, Sonnet xlix, which describes "sleep" as "son of the sable night," and "brother to death." Homer and Hesiod both call sleep the "brother of death." The phrase is used by Ronsard and De Baif. Daniel and other Elizabethan poets were well acquainted with Desportes' apostrophes of sleep; see *Amours d'Hippolyte*, lxxv, 12: "O frère de la mort"; and *Prière au Sommeil* (in *Diane*, bk. i): "Fils de la Nuit et de la Silence."

SONNETS

LXXIV

But be contented: when that fell arrest
Without all bail shall carry me away,
My life hath in this line some interest,
Which for memorial still with thee shall stay.
When thou reviewest this, thou dost review
The very part was consecrate to thee:
The earth can have but earth, which is his due;
My spirit is thine, the better part of me:
So then thou hast but lost the dregs of life,
The prey of worms, my body being dead; 10
The coward conquest of a wretch's knife,
Too base of thee to be remembered.
 The worth of that is that which it contains,
 And that is this, and this with thee remains.

LXXV

So are you to my thoughts as food to life,
Or as sweet-season'd showers are to the ground;

LXXIV, 1-2 *fell arrest . . . away*] Cf. *Hamlet*, V, ii, 328-329: "this *fell* sergeant death Is *strict* in his *arrest*." "Arrest without all [*i. e.*, any] bail" is the legal term for summary arrest.

8 *the better part of me*] See xxxix, 2, *supra*.

11 *a wretch's knife*] another conventional reference to the destroying activity of the wretch Time. Cf. lxiii, 10: "confounding age's cruel *knife*," and c, 14, "[time's] crooked *knife*." Time is denounced as "this *bloody tyrant*" xvi, 2.

13-14 *The worth of that . . . remains*] The worth of the body lies in the soul which it holds, and this verse which enshrines my soul remains with thee. Cf. xxxix, 13-14.

LXXV This sonnet was omitted from Shakespeare's "Poems" of 1640.

SONNETS

And for the peace of you I hold such strife
As 'twixt a miser and his wealth is found;
Now proud as an enjoyer, and anon
Doubting the filching age will steal his treasure;
Now counting best to be with you alone,
Then better'd that the world may see my pleasure:
Sometime all full with feasting on your sight,
And by and by clean starved for a look;
Possessing or pursuing no delight,
Save what is had or must from you be took.
Thus do I pine and surfeit day by day,
Or gluttoning on all, or all away.

10

LXXVI

Why is my verse so barren of new pride,
So far from variation or quick change?
Why with the time do I not glance aside
To new-found methods and to compounds strange?
Why write I still all one, ever the same,

3 *for the peace of you*] in order to enjoy the peace which your love affords.

10 *starved for a look*] Cf. *xlvi*, 3, *supra*: "famish'd for a look," and note.

13 *pine and surfeit*] Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 602: "surfeit by the eye and pine the maw."

14 *Or gluttoning . . . all away*] Either I have every opportunity of gluttoning or all food is inaccessible.

LXXVI This sonnet was omitted from Shakespeare's "Poems" of 1640.

3-4 *Why with the time . . . strange*] Cf. Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnet iii: "Let dainty wits cry on the Sisters nine . . . Ennobling new-found tropes with problems old, Or with strange similes enrich each line." Cf. for like comment by Shakespeare on contemporary sonneteers' extravagances *xxi* and *xxxviii* 10, *supra*, and *cxix*, *infra*.

SONNETS

And keep invention in a noted weed,
That every word doth almost tell my name,
Showing their birth and where they did proceed?
O, know, sweet love, I always write of you,
And you and love are still my argument;
So all my best is dressing old words new,
Spending again what is already spent:
 For as the sun is daily new and old,
 So is my love still telling what is told.

10

LXXVII

Thy glass will show thee how thy beauties wear,
Thy dial how thy precious minutes waste;
The vacant leaves thy mind's imprint will bear,
And of this book this learning mayst thou taste.
The wrinkles which thy glass will truly show
Of mouthed graves will give thee memory;

6 *in a noted weed*] in a familiar garb; in the conventional shape.

9-10 *O, know, sweet love . . . still my argument*] Cf. Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnet xc: "For nothing from my will or wit doth flow Since all my words thy beauty doth indite." For "argument" [*i. e.*, theme] cf. xxxviii, 3 and lxxix, 5.

LXXVII, 3 *The vacant leaves . . . will bear*] The sonnet possibly accompanied the gift of a memorandum book. Cf. line 10, *infra*: "these waste blanks," and cxxii, 1, *infra*. The friend is bidden record his sentiments on the blank paper; perusal of his notes hereafter will tell him of the change or progress of his feelings.

4 *this learning*] *sc.* of the progress of Time's decay.

6 *mouthed graves*] gaping or yawning graves. Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, I, iii, 97: "mouthed wounds"; *Venus and Adonis*, 757: "a swallowing grave"; and *Hamlet*, III, ii, 379: "churchyards yawn."

SONNETS

Thou by thy dial's shady stealth mayst know
Time's thievish progress to eternity.
Look, what thy memory cannot contain
Commit to these waste blanks, and thou shalt find 10
Those children nursed, deliver'd from thy brain,
To take a new acquaintance of thy mind.
 These offices, so oft as thou wilt look,
 Shall profit thee and much enrich thy book.

LXXVIII

So oft have I invoked thee for my Muse
And found such fair assistance in my verse
As every alien pen hath got my use
And under thee their poesy disperse.

7 *thy dial's shady stealth*] Cf. civ, 9-10, *infra*: "Ah! yet doth beauty, like
a *dial-hand steal*," etc.

10 *blanks*] Theobald's admirable emendation of the original *blacks*.

LXXVIII, 3-4 *every alien pen . . . disperse*] The poet begins to complain
that his friend's patronage is sought by other poets. This theme
is continued for the most part to the close of *Sonnet lxxxvi*. In *Sonnet*
lxxxii the poet refers to the extravagant eulogy of the "dedicated words
which writers use" in addressing his friend. There seems small
doubt that Shakespeare has in mind the dedicatory sonnets and ad-
dresses inscribed in 1594 and succeeding years to his own patron, the
Earl of Southampton, who was in Nashe's phrase "a dear lover and
cherisher" of poets. Among the earl's poetic eulogists were, besides
Nashe, Barnabe Barnes, Gervase Markham, John Florio, Samuel
Daniel, John Davies, George Chapman, and many others. All these
panegyrists of Southampton exhausted in his honour the vocabulary
of praise, mainly in sonnets, and one or other of them is doubtless
referred to in these sonnets of Shakespeare, though there is room for
doubt as to the precise individuality of Shakespeare's chief rival.

3 *got my use*] acquired my habit (of writing poems to you).

SONNETS

Thine eyes, that taught the dumb on high to sing
And heavy ignorance aloft to fly,
Have added feathers to the learned's wing
And given grace a double majesty.
Yet be most proud of that which I compile,
Whose influence is thine and born of thee: 10
In others' works thou dost but mend the style,
And arts with thy sweet graces graced be;
But thou art all my art, and dost advance
As high as learning my rude ignorance.

LXXIX

Whilst I alone did call upon thy aid,
My verse alone had all thy gentle grace;
But now my gracious numbers are decay'd,
And my sick Muse doth give another place.
I grant, sweet love, thy lovely argument
Deserves the travail of a worthier pen;
Yet what of thee thy poet doth invent

5-6 *Thine eyes . . . aloft to fly*] A reference to the poet himself. Cf. line 14, *infra*: "my rude ignorance." For similar imagery cf. Spenser's sonnet to the Earl of Essex (*Faerie Queene*, 1590): "My Muse whose *fethers* nothing flitt, Doe yet but flagg and lowly learne *to fly*, *With bolder wing* shall dare *aloft* to sty [*i. e.*, to find abode]." See also Ovid's *Metam.*, xv (Golding's transl., 1612 ed., p. 185 a): "I minde . . . up among the starres to stye . . . and in the cloudes *to flye*."

7-8 *Have added feathers . . . double majesty*] A somewhat inflated compliment to the rival poet, whom the patron has honoured with his patronage.

9 *compile*] compose, write. Cf. lxxxv, 2, *supra*.

LXXIX, 5 *thy lovely argument*] the theme of thy loveliness; cf. xxxviii, 3, *supra*.

SONNETS

He robs thee of, and pays it thee again.
He lends thee virtue, and he stole that word
From thy behaviour; beauty doth he give, 10
And found it in thy cheek: he can afford
No praise to thee but what in thee doth live.
Then thank him not for that which he doth say,
Since what he owes thee thou thyself dost pay.

LXXX

O, how I faint when I of you do write,
Knowing a better spirit doth use your name,
And in the praise thereof spends all his might,
To make me tongue-tied, speaking of your fame!
But since your worth, wide as the ocean is,
The humble as the proudest sail doth bear,
My saucy bark, inferior far to his,
On your broad main doth wilfully appear.
Your shallowest help will hold me up afloat,
Whilst he upon your soundless deep doth ride; 10
Or, being wreck'd, I am a worthless boat,
He of tall building and of goodly pride:
Then if he thrive and I be cast away,
The worst was this; my love was my decay.

LXXX, 2 *a better spirit*] a rival poet panegyrising the object of Shakespeare's addresses. Cf. cxliv, 3-4: "The *better* angel . . . The *worser spirit*," and note.

4 *tongue-tied*] See lxxxv, 1, and note.

7 *My saucy bark*] The image is frequent in the sonneteers. Cf. Barnes' *Parthenophil*, xci: "My fancy's ship . . . my thought's swift pinnace," and Lodge's *Phillis*, xi: "My frail and earthly bark, . . . my brittle boat." The nautical figure is pursued, lxxxvi, 1-2, *infra*.

13 *cast away*] wrecked; a common usage.

SONNETS

LXXXI

Or I shall live your epitaph to make,
Or you survive when I in earth am rotten;
From hence your memory death cannot take,
Although in me each part will be forgotten.
Your name from hence immortal life shall have,
Though I, once gone, to all the world must die:
The earth can yield me but a common grave,
When you entombed in men's eyes shall lie.
Your monument shall be my gentle verse,
Which eyes not yet created shall o'er-read; 10
And tongues to be your being shall rehearse,
When all the breathers of this world are dead;
 You still shall live — such virtue hath my pen —
 Where breath most breathes, even in the mouths
 of men.

LXXXII

I grant thou wert not married to my Muse,
And therefore mayst without attaint o'erlook
The dedicated words which writers use
Of their fair subject, blessing every book.

LXXXI, 9 *Your monument . . . verse*] Cf. Daniel's *Delia*, xxxvii, 9: "This
[sc. my verse] shall remain thy lasting monument."

12 *breathers*] Cf. *As you like it*, III, ii, 263: "I will chide no *breather*
in the world."

14 *in the mouths of men*] Cf. the Latin phrase (from Ennius): "Volito vivu,
per ora virum," to which Shakespeare had already made allusion in
Tit. Andr., I, i, 389-390. See note there.

LXXXII, 2 *attaint*] reproach, disgrace, impeachment.

3-4 *The dedicated words . . . blessing every book*] See note on lxxviii, 3-4,
supra. Cf. Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller or Adventures of*
Jack Wilton (1594), Dedication to Southampton: "Incomprehensible

SONNETS

Thou art as fair in knowledge as in hue,
Finding thy worth a limit past my praise;
And therefore art enforced to seek anew
Some fresher stamp of the time-bettering days.
And do so, love; yet when they have devised
What strained touches rhetoric can lend, 10
Thou truly fair wert truly sympathized
In true plain words by thy true-telling friend;
And their gross painting might be better used
Where cheeks need blood; in thee it is abused.

LXXXIII

I never saw that you did painting need,
And therefore to your fair no painting set;

is the height of your spirit both in heroical resolution and matters of conceit. Vnretrievably perisheth that booke whatsoever to wast paper, which on the diamond rocke of your judgement disasterly chanceth to be shipwrackt." Elsewhere Nashe calls Southampton "the matchless image of honour and magnificent rewarder of vertue, Jove's eagle-borne Ganimede." For other "strange touches" of "rhetoric devised" in Southampton's honour, see Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*, Appendix IV.

8 *time-bettering days*] Cf. xxxii, 10, *supra*: "the bettering of the time."

11 *truly sympathized*] described with perfect fidelity. So *Lucrece*, 1113, and *L. L. L.*, III, i, 46.

13-14 *better used . . . it is abused*] Cf. *L. L. L.*, II, iii, 225-226, where "better used" again rhymes with "it is abused"; see, too, cxxxiv, 10-12.

LXXXIII, 1-2 *painting . . . painting*] The word and thought continues the reference to "gross painting," *i. e.*, "extravagant compliment," in lxxxii, 13. Constable frequently uses the phrase "*paint in verse*" for "describe in poetry." Cf. *Diana*, Decade II, Sonnet i, and Decade IV, Sonnet i (ed. Hazlitt, p. 15), where the correct reading of line 2 is "In vain my wit doth *paint in verse* my woe."

2 *fair*] beauty. Cf. xvi, 11, lxxviii, 3, *supra*, and *Com. of Errors*, II, i, 98.

SONNETS

I found, or thought I found, you did exceed
The barren tender of a poet's debt:
And therefore have I slept in your report,
That you yourself, being extant, well might show
How far a modern quill doth come too short,
Speaking of worth, what worth in you doth grow.
This silence for my sin you did impute,
Which shall be most my glory, being dumb; 10
For I impair not beauty being mute,
When others would give life and bring a tomb.
 There lives more life in one of your fair eyes
 Than both your poets can in praise devise.

LXXXIV

Who is it that says most? which can say more
Than this rich praise, that you alone are you?
In whose confine immured is the store
Which should example where your equal grew.

5 slept in your report] abstained from making report or eulogy of you.

7 modern] ordinary, commonplace.

12 a tomb] Cf. xvii, 3: "it [my verse] is but as *a tomb* Which hides your life."

14 both your poets] apparently Shakespeare and the other poet, who has abandoned himself to reckless panegyric of their common patron. Of Southampton's poetic protégés, Barnes makes the most marked reference to the noble patron's "fair eyes"; see his sonnet (dedicatory to *Parthenophil*, 1593): "gracious (*i. e.*, lovely) eyes, Those heavenly lamps which give the Muses light, Which give and take in course that holy fire."

LXXXIV, 3-4 *the store . . . equal grew]* the treasury which should provide copies or examples of yourself of worth equal to the original. The idea is, as in *Sonnets* i-xvii, drawn from the peculiar obligation of begetting heirs imposed on men of exceptional charm. For "store" cf. xiv, 12, *supra*.

SONNETS

Lean penury within that pen doth dwell
That to his subject lends not some small glory;
But he that writes of you, if he can tell
That you are you, so dignifies his story.
Let him but copy what in you is writ,
Not making worse what nature made so clear, 10
And such a counterpart shall fame his wit,
Making his style admired every where.
 You to your beauteous blessings add a curse,
 Being fond on praise, which makes your praises
 worse.

LXXXV

My tongue-tied Muse in manners holds her still,
While comments of your praise, richly compiled,

5-6 *Lean penury . . . small glory*] The pen or book lends some glory to its subject for the converse sentiment that the glory of the subject communicates itself to the pen or book; cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, I, iii, 92-93: "That book in many's eyes doth share the glory That in gold clasps locks in the golden story." See, too, ciii, 1-2, *infra*.

11 *fame*] confer fame on. The word is rarely found as a verb; so "famoused" (xxv, 9) is used adjectivally.

14 *Being fond . . . praises worse*] Being fond of such panegyric as debases what is praiseworthy in you instead of exalting it.

LXXXV, 1 *My tongue-tied Muse*] The numbing effect of a patron's eminent virtues on a modest poet is a common conceit among Elizabethan poets. Cf. *Campion to Lord Walden* whose "admired virtues" "Bred such despairing to *my daunted muse* That it could scarcely utter naked truth." "In manners holds her still" means "keeps a respectful silence." Cf. xxxix, 1.

2 *comments . . . compiled*] eulogies composed or described in fine language. Cf. lxxviii, 9, *supra*. Barnfield in his *Cassandra* (1595) writes of his heroine's lover that "his tongue *compiles her praise*."

SONNETS

Reserve their character with golden quill,
And precious phrase by all the Muses filed.
I think good thoughts, whilst other write good words,
And, like unletter'd clerk, still cry "Amen"
To every hymn that able spirit affords,
In polish'd form of well refined pen.
Hearing you praised, I say "'T is so, 't is true,"
And to the most of praise add something more; 10
But that is in my thought, whose love to you,
Though words come hindmost, holds his rank before.
Then others for the breath of words respect,
Me for my dumb thoughts, speaking in effect,

LXXXVI

Was it the proud full sail of his great verse,
Bound for the prize of all too precious you,
That did my ripe thoughts in my brain inhearse,
Making their tomb the womb wherein they grew?

3 *Reserve . . . quill*] Preserve or perpetuate the handwriting by executing it with a golden quill. For "reserve" cf. xxxii, 7, *supra*: "Reserve them for my love."

4 *filed*] polished, refined. Barnfield in his *Cassandra* uses this epithet ("her *filed* tongue") as here in near association with "compiled" (line 2). See *L. L. L.*, V, i, 9: "his tongue *filed*."

LXXXVI A compliment to the rival poet, and the main argument in favour of his identification with George Chapman; but Chapman's poetic style, though very involved, cannot be credited with exceptional dignity. Shakespeare's words will not bear too literal an interpretation.

4 *Making their tomb . . . grew*] Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, II, iii, 9-10: "The earth that 's nature's mother, is her *tomb*; What is her burying grave, that is her *womb*."

SONNETS

Was it his spirit, thy spirits taught to write
Above a mortal pitch, that struck me dead?
No, neither he, nor his compeers by night
Giving him aid, my verse astonished.
He, nor that affable familiar ghost
Which nightly gulls him with intelligence, 10
As victors, of my silence cannot boast;
I was not sick of any fear from thence:
 But when your countenance fill'd up his line,
 Then lack'd I matter; that enfeebled mine.

LXXXVII

Farewell! thou art too dear for my possessing,
And like enough thou know'st thy estimate:

7-10 *his compeers . . . intelligence*] The aid rendered poets by "nightly familiars" is noticed by Chapman in his poem, *The Shadow of Night* (1594). Nashe gives at the same date a more general description of the workings of "nightly familiars" in his prose tract *The Terrors of the Night* (1594).

8 *my verse astonished*] stunned with terror or struck dumb my verse; cf. lxxxv, 1. See *Lucrece*, 1730-1731: "Stone-still, *astonish'd* . . . Stood Collatine."

LXXXVII, 1 *possessing*] The present participle, which ends no less than ten lines of this sonnet, is frequently found in the same place in early Elizabethan sonnets. Cf. Daniel, *Sonnets after Astrophel*, 1591, No. xxiv, where eight lines end similarly, *i. e.*, "paining," "crying," "waining," "trying," "aspiring," "desiring," "mourning," "burning." A like number of present participles end lines in Watson's *Tears of Fancie*, xxviii, Constable and Barnes show similar predilection for rhymes in "-ing."

SONNETS

The charter of thy worth gives thee releasing;
My bonds in thee are all determinate.
For how do I hold thee but by thy granting?
And for that riches where is my deserving?
The cause of this fair gift in me is wanting,
And so my patent back again is swerving.
Thyself thou gavest, thy own worth then not knowing,
Or me, to whom thou gavest it, else mistaking; 10
So thy great gift, upon misprision growing,
Comes home again, on better judgement making.
Thus have I had thee, as a dream doth flatter,
In sleep a king, but waking no such matter.

LXXXVIII

When thou shalt be disposed to set me light,
And place my merit in the eye of scorn,

3-4 *The charter . . . all determinate*] For like legal terminology see Barnes' *Parthenophil* (1593), Sonnet xv: "I shall resign Thy love's large charter and thy bonds again." Cf. lviii, 9, *supra*, and cxxxiv, *infra*. "Determinate" is a legal term for "ended" or "expired."

6 *riches*] singular noun, like the French *richesse*, *i. e.*, wealth. The usage is frequent.

8 *my patent*] my monopoly or privilege; so Daniel uses "privilege" in *Sonnets after Astrophel*, 1591, No. xviii.

11 *upon misprision growing*] the outcome of error; so *L. L. L.*, IV, iii, 94, and *Mids. N. Dr.*, III, ii, 90.

13-14 *as a dream doth flatter, In sleep a king*] So *Rom. and Jul.*, V, i, 1-9: "If I may trust the flattering truth of sleep . . . I dreamt . . . That I . . . was an emperor."

14 *no such matter*] nothing of the sort. Cf. *Tw. Night*, III, i, 4-5: "VIOLA. Art thou a churchman? CLOWN. *No such matter, sir.*"

LXXXVIII, 1 *to set me light*] to underrate me, to despise me. Cf. *Rich. II*, I, iii, 293: "The man . . . sets it [*i. e.*, sorrow] light."

SONNETS

Upon thy side against myself I'll fight,
And prove thee virtuous, though thou art forsworn.
With mine own weakness being best acquainted,
Upon thy part I can set down a story
Of faults conceal'd, wherein I am attainted;
That thou in losing me shalt win much glory:
And I by this will be a gainer too;
For bending all my loving thoughts on thee, 10
The injuries that to myself I do,
Doing thee vantage, double-vantage me.
Such is my love, to thee I so belong,
That for thy right myself will bear all wrong.

LXXXIX

Say that thou didst forsake me for some fault,
And I will comment upon that offence:
Speak of my lameness, and I straight will halt,
Against thy reasons making no defence.
Thou canst not, love, disgrace me half so ill,
To set a form upon desired change,
As I'll myself disgrace; knowing thy will,
I will acquaintance strangle and look strange;

6 *Upon thy part*] In support of your view of the case; so xlix, 12. Cf.

Hamlet, III, i, 123: "but yet I could accuse me of such things."

LXXXIX, 3 *Speak of my lameness . . . halt*] A figurative illustration.

Cf. xxxvii, 3, *supra*.

6-7 *To set a form . . . disgrace*] As to set up a pretext, which I shall discredit, for the change or alienation you desire in me.

8 *strangle . . . strange*] put an end to, and assume a distant expression.

Cf. *Tw. Night*, V, i, 141: "*strangle* thy propriety"; *Com. of Errors*, V, i, 295: "Why *look you strange* on me?"

SONNETS

Be absent from thy walks; and in my tongue
Thy sweet beloved name no more shall dwell, 10
Lest I, too much profane, should do it wrong,
And haply of our old acquaintance tell.

For thee, against myself I'll vow debate,
For I must ne'er love him whom thou dost hate.

XC

Then hate me when thou wilt; if ever, now;
Now, while the world is bent my deeds to cross,
Join with the spite of fortune, make me bow,
And do not drop in for an after-loss:
Ah, do not, when my heart hath 'scaped this sorrow,
Come in the rearward of a conquer'd woe;
Give not a windy night a rainy morrow,
To linger out a purposed overthrow.
If thou wilt leave me, do not leave me last, 10
When other petty griefs have done their spite,
But in the onset come: so shall I taste
At first the very worst of fortune's might;
And other strains of woe, which now seem woe,
Compared with loss of thee will not seem so.

9 *thy walks*] thy haunts.

13 *against myself . . . debate*] I'll declare war on myself. So xxxv, 11, xlix, 11, and cxlix, 2.

xc, 6 *in the rearward of*] behind, at the end of. Cf. *Much Ado*, IV, i, 126: "on the rearward of reproaches."

7 *Give not . . . morrow*] Shakespeare frequently refers to rain as the ordinary sequel of wind. Cf. *Lucrece*, 1788-1790, and note there.

13 *other strains of woe*] Cf. *Much Ado*, V, i, 11-12: "Measure his woe the length and breadth of mine, And let it answer every strain for strain."

SONNETS

XC I

Some glory in their birth, some in their skill,
Some in their wealth, some in their body's force;
Some in their garments, though new-fangled ill;
Some in their hawks and hounds, some in their horse;
And every humour hath his adjunct pleasure,
Wherein it finds a joy above the rest:
But these particulars are not my measure;
All these I better in one general best.
Thy love is better than high birth to me,
Richer than wealth, prouder than garments' cost, 10
Of more delight than hawks or horses be;
And having thee, of all men's pride I boast:
 Wretched in this alone, that thou mayst take
 All this away and me most wretched make.

XCII

But do thy worst to steal thyself away,
For term of life thou art assured mine;
And life no longer than thy love will stay,
For it depends upon that love of thine.
Then need I not to fear the worst of wrongs,
When in the least of them my life hath end.
I see a better state to me belongs
Than that which on thy humour doth depend:

xc i, 10 *Richer than wealth . . . cost*] Cf. *Cymb.*, III, iii, 23-24: "*Richer than doing nothing for a bauble, Prouder than rustling in unpaid-for silk.*"

SONNETS

Thou canst not vex me with inconstant mind,
Since that my life on thy revolt doth lie. 10
O, what a happy title do I find,
Happy to have thy love, happy to die!
But what 's so blessed-fair that fears no blot?
Thou mayst be false, and yet I know it not.

XCIH

So shall I live, supposing thou art true,
Like a deceived husband; so love's face
May still seem love to me, though alter'd new;
Thy looks with me, thy heart in other place:
For there can live no hatred in thine eye,
Therefore in that I cannot know thy change.
In many's looks the false heart's history
Is writ in moods and frowns and wrinkles strange,
But heaven in thy creation did decree 10
That in thy face sweet love should ever dwell;
Whate'er thy thoughts or thy heart's workings be,
Thy looks should nothing thence but sweetness tell.
How like Eve's apple doth thy beauty grow,
If thy sweet virtue answer not thy show!

xcii, 10, *Since that my life . . . doth lie*] Seeing that any change in thy devotion will mean death to me.

xcih, 7-8 *In many's looks . . . wrinkles strange*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 1396: "The face of either ciphered either's heart," and *Mach.*, I, iv, 11-12: "There's no art To find the mind's construction in the face."

14 *show*] external appearance. Cf. liv, 9, *supra*; "their *virtue* only is their *show*."

SONNETS

XCIV

They that have power to hurt and will do none,
That do not do the thing they most do show,
Who, moving others, are themselves as stone,
Unmoved, cold and to temptation slow;
They rightly do inherit heaven's graces
And husband nature's riches from expense;
They are the lords and owners of their faces,
Others but stewards of their excellence.
The summer's flower is to the summer sweet,
Though to itself it only live and die, 10
But if that flower with base infection meet,
The basest weed outbraves his dignity:
 For sweetest things turn sourest by their deeds;
 Lilies that fester smell far worse than weeds.

XCV

How sweet and lovely dost thou make the shame
Which, like a canker in the fragrant rose,
Doth spot the beauty of thy budding name!
O, in what sweets dost thou thy sins inclose!
That tongue that tells the story of thy days,
Making lascivious comments on thy sport,

xciv, 7 *They are the lords . . . faces*] They are absolute masters of themselves in all respects. Cf. *K. John*, I, i, 137: "Lord of thy presence."

10 *to itself . . . die*] Cf. liv, 11, *supra*: "[Roses] Die to themselves."

14 *Lilies . . . than weeds*] Cf. lxix, 12, *supra*. This line appears in the tragedy of *Edward III* (before 1595), II, i, 451; see xxxiii, 2, *supra*, and cxlii, 6, *infra*, for other echoes of the same play.

xcv, 2 *like a canker*] for the imagery see xxxv, 4, and lxx, 7, *supra*.

SONNETS

Cannot dispraise but in a kind of praise;
Naming thy name blesses an ill report.
O, what a mansion have those vices got
Which for their habitation chose out thee, 10
Where beauty's veil doth cover every blot
And all things turn to fair that eyes can see!
Take heed, dear heart, of this large privilege;
The hardest knife ill used doth lose his edge.

XCVI

Some say, thy fault is youth, some wantonness;
Some say, thy grace is youth and gentle sport;
Both grace and faults are loved of more and less:
Thou makest faults graces that to thee resort.
As on the finger of a throned queen
The basest jewel will be well esteem'd,
So are those errors that in thee are seen
To truths translated and for true things deem'd.
How many lambs might the stern wolf betray,
If like a lamb he could his looks translate! 10
How many gazers mightst thou lead away,
If thou wouldst use the strength of all thy state!

12 *And all things . . . see*] Cf. xl, 13, *supra*: "Lascivious grace, in whom all ill well shows."

xcvi This sonnet was omitted from Shakespeare's "Poems" of 1640.

3 *of more and less*] by great and small. Cf. *I Hen. IV*, IV, iii, 68: "The *more and less* came in."

8 *translated*] transformed. So line 10, *infra*.

12 *the strength of all thy state*] a periphrasis for "the full extent of thy strength."

SONNETS

But do not so; I love thee in such sort,
As thou being mine, mine is thy good report.

XCVII

How like a winter hath my absence been
From thee, the pleasure of the fleeting year!
What freezings have I felt, what dark days seen!
What old December's bareness every where!
And yet this time removed was summer's time;
The teeming autumn, big with rich increase
Bearing the wanton burthen of the prime,
Like widowed wombs after their lords' decease:
Yet this abundant issue seem'd to me
But hope of orphans and unfather'd fruit; 10
For summer and his pleasures wait on thee,
And, thou away, the very birds are mute;
Or, if they sing, 't is with so dull a cheer
That leaves look pale, dreading the winter's near.

XCVIII

From you have I been absent in the spring,
When proud-pied April, dress'd in all his trim,

13-14 *But do not so . . . good report*] This couplet is repeated at the end
of *Sonnet xxxvi*.

xcvii, 5 *time removed*] time of separation.

6 *The teeming autumn . . . increase*] Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, II, i, 112: "The
childing autumn."

7 *prime*] spring. So *Lucrece*, 332.

xcviii, 2 *proud-pied April*] Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, I, ii, 26-28: "Such com-
fort as do lusty young men feel When well *apparell'd April*," etc.;
Tit. Andr., III, i, 18: "youthful April."

SONNETS

Hath put a spirit of youth in every thing,
That heavy Saturn laugh'd and leap'd with him.
Yet nor the lays of birds, nor the sweet smell
Of different flowers in odour and in hue,
Could make me any summer's story tell,
Or from their proud lap pluck them where they grew:
Nor did I wonder at the lily's white,
Nor praise the deep vermilion in the rose; 10
They were but sweet, but figures of delight,
Drawn after you, you pattern of all those.
Yet seem'd it winter still, and, you away,
As with your shadow I with these did play.

4 *laugh'd and leap'd*] Cf. *Merch. of Ven.*, I, i, 49: "to laugh and leap and say you are merry."

7 *any summer's story*] any gay, pleasant story. Cf. *Cymb.*, III, iv, 12-14: "If 't be summer news Smile to't before; if winterly, thou need'st But keep that countenance still."

8 *their proud lap*] Cf. *Rich. II*, V, ii, 47: "the green lap of the new come spring."

9-10 *Nor did I . . . in the rose*] Cf. Barnfield's *Affectionate Shepherd* (I, iii): "His *Ivory-white* and *Alabaster* skin Is staid throughout with rare *Vermillion* red. . . . But as the *Lillie* and the blushing *Rose*, So white and red on him in order growes." This is the only place where Shakespeare uses the word "vermilion." It is not uncommon in Elizabethan poetry. Cf. Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, cii, 5: "vermilion dyes," and Daniel's *Rosamond* (1592), line 846: "vermilion red" (of roses). It is constantly found in French and Italian poetry (vermeil and vermiglio).

11 *but sweet, but figures of delight*] only sweetness, only figures of delight. "Sweet" is again used for "sweetness," xcix, 14, *infra*. Cf., too, Constable's *Miscellaneous Sonnets*, No. vii (c. 1590, ed. Hazlitt, 1859, p. 27): "But all those beauties were but figures of thy praise."

SONNETS

XCIX

The forward violet thus did I chide:
Sweet thief, whence didst thou steal thy sweet that smells,
If not from my love's breath? The purple pride
Which on thy soft cheek for complexion dwells
In my love's veins thou hast too grossly dyed.
The lily I condemned for thy hand,
And buds of marjoram had stol'n thy hair;
The roses fearfully on thorns did stand,
One biushing shame, another white despair;

XCIX, 1-14 The first line is metrically redundant, adding to the sonnet a fifteenth line. Many sonnets of fifteen lines appear in Barnes' *Parthenophil* (1593), e. g., xxxv, xxxvi, xxxviii, xxxix, xl, etc. For other irregularities of form in Shakespeare's *Sonnets* cf. cxxvi and cxl, *infra*.

1, *seq.* *The forward violet, etc.*] The common conceit that the flowers take their colour and smell from the poet's idol was probably suggested to Shakespeare by Constable's adaptation of it (*Diana* (1594), Decade I, Sonnet ix). Ronsard (*Amours*, I, cxi) tells how from the flowers "du beau jardin de son printemps riant" (*i. e.*, from his mistress) come all the sweet perfumes of the East.

6 *for thy hand*] for stealing the whiteness of thy hand.

7 *buds of marjoram*] Buds of marjoram are dark purple red; the flowers are pink. Marjoram was best known as an ingredient of scent, and it is probably the perfume of this flower rather than its colour which the poet associates with his friend's hair. On the other hand, dark auburn hair might perhaps be poetically described as "marjoram coloured." See Suckling's *Tragedy of Brennoralt*, IV, i, 155: "Hair [of a girl] curling and cover'd like buds of marjoram," where "cover'd" is probably a misprint for "color'd."

8-9 *The roses fearfully . . . white despair*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 477-479: "The colour in thy face, That even for anger makes the lily pale, And the red rose blush at her own disgrace."

SONNETS

A third, nor red nor white, had stol'n of both, 10
 And to his robbery had annex'd thy breath;
 But, for his theft, in pride of all his growth
 A vengeful canker eat him up to death.
 More flowers I noted, yet I none could see
 But sweet or colour it had stol'n from thee.

C

Where art thou, Muse, that thou forget'st so long
 To speak of that which gives thee all thy might?
 Spend'st thou thy fury on some worthless song,
 Darkening thy power to lend base subjects light?
 Return, forgetful Muse, and straight redeem
 In gentle numbers time so idly spent;
 Sing to the ear that doth thy lays esteem
 And gives thy pen both skill and argument.
 Rise, resty Muse, my love's sweet face survey,
 If Time have any wrinkle graven there; 10

12 *in pride of all his growth*] in the glory of his prime.

13 *A vengeful canker . . . death*] Cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, II, iii, 30: "Full soon the *canker death eats up* that plant"; and see xxxv, 4, and lxx, 7, *supra*.

14-15 *More flowers . . . stol'n from thee*] Cf. Constable's *Diana* (Decade I, Sonnet ix, 9-10): "In brief, *all flowers* from her their virtue take; From her *sweet* breath their *sweet* smells do proceed."

c, 3 *fury*] poetic inspiration; a common usage. Cf. xvii, 11, *supra*: "a poet's rage," and *Mids. N. Dr.*, V, i, 12: "The poet's eye, in a fine *frenzy* rolling."

8 *And gives thy pen . . . argument*] Cf. Ronsard, *Amours*, II, 12: "*ma plume* sinon vous ne sçait autre *sujet*," etc.; for "argument" [*i. e.*, theme] see xxxviii, 3, and note.

9 *resty*] slothful, torpid.

SONNETS

If any, be a satire to decay,
And make Time's spoils despised every where.
Give my love fame faster than Time wastes life;
So thou prevent'st his scythe and crooked knife.

CI

O truant Muse, what shall be thy amends
For thy neglect of truth in beauty dyed? -
Both truth and beauty on my love depends;
So dost thou too, and therein dignified.
Make answer, Muse: wilt thou not haply say,
"Truth needs no colour, with his colour fix'd;
Beauty no pencil, beauty's truth to lay;
But best is best, if never intermix'd?"
Because he needs no praise, wilt thou be dumb?
Excuse not silence so, for 't lies in thee 10
To make him much outlive a gilded tomb
And to be praised of ages yet to be.
Then do thy office, Muse; I teach thee how
To make him seem long hence as he shows now.

11 *satire*] satirist; no uncommon usage.

14 *So thou prevent'st*] In this manner thou anticipatest.

CI, 3 *truth and beauty*] The association of truth and beauty is similarly noticed in *Sonnets* xiv and liv, 1-2. So *Phoenix and Turtle*, 62-64.

6 *with his colour fix'd*] seeing that the colour or inherent disposition of any beloved is constant or unalterable.

7 *to lay*] to lay on (as of painters' colours); cf. *Tw. Night*, I, v, 224-225: "red and white Nature's . . . hand laid on."

11 *gilded tomb*] So lv, 1: "*gilded* monuments"; cf. *Merch. of Ven.*, II, vii, 69: "*Gilded tombs* do worms infold."

SONNETS

CII

My love is strengthen'd, though more weak in seeming ;
I love not less, though less the show appear :
That love is merchandized whose rich esteeming
The owner's tongue doth publish every where.
Our love was new, and then but in the spring,
When I was wont to greet it with my lays ;
As Philomel in summer's front doth sing,
And stops her pipe in growth of riper days :
Not that the summer is less pleasant now
Than when her mournful hymns did hush the night, 10
But that wild music burthens every bough,
And sweets grown common lose their dear delight.
Therefore, like her, I sometime hold my tongue,
Because I would not dull you with my song.

CII, 3-4 *That love is merchandized . . . every where*] Cf. *L. L. L.*, II, i, 15-16: "Beauty is bought by judgment of the eye, Not utter'd by base sale of chapmen's tongues," and xxi, 14, *supra*.

7 *in summer's front*] Cf. *Wint. Tale*, IV, iv, 2-3: "Flora Peering in *April's front*."

8-10 *stops her pipe . . . hush the night*] The nightingale is credited with singing only by night, for fear of competition with other birds, in *Merch. of Ven.*, V, i, 104 *seq.*; see, too, *Lucrece*, 1148. The bird is always feminine in Shakespeare, in view of her mythical descent from the outraged Philomela, wife of Tereus (see *Lucrece*, 1079 and 1128, and *Tit. Andr.*, II, iii, 43, *et passim*). The Quarto here reads *his pipe*, for which is rightly substituted *her pipe*.

12 *sweets grown common . . . dear delight*] Cf. lii, 3 *seq.*, *supra*, for a like sentiment.

SONNETS

CIII

Alack, what poverty my Muse brings forth,
That having such a scope to show her pride,
The argument, all bare, is of more worth
Than when it hath my added praise beside!
O, blame me not, if I no more can write!
Look in your glass, and there appears a face
That over-goes my blunt invention quite,
Dulling my lines and doing me disgrace.
Were it not sinful then, striving to mend,
To mar the subject that before was well? 10
For to no other pass my verses tend
Than of your graces and your gifts to tell;
 And more, much more, than in my verse can sit,
 Your own glass shows you when you look in it.

CIV

To me, fair friend, you never can be old,
For as you were when first your eye I eyed,

CIII, 1 *Alack, what poverty . . . forth*] Cf. lxxxiv, 5: "Lean penury within that pen doth dwell," etc.

3 *The argument, all bare*] Cf. xxvi, 5-7, where the poet fears "wit so poor as mine May make" his effort "seem bare" and "all naked." For "argument" (*i. e.*, theme), see xxxviii, 3.

6-7 *a face . . . invention quite*] Cf. *Othello*, II, i, 61-63: "a maid . . . that excels the quirks of blazoning pens."

9-10 *striving to mend . . . was well*] Cf. *K. John*, IV, ii, 28-29, and *Lear*, I, iv, 347: "Striving to better, oft we mar *what's well*."

SONNETS

Such seems your beauty still. Three winters cold
Have from the forests shook three summers' pride,
Three beauteous springs to yellow autumn turn'd
In process of the seasons have I seen,
Three April perfumes in three hot Junes burn'd,
Since first I saw you fresh, which yet are green.
Ah, yet doth beauty, like a dial-hand,
Steal from his figure, and no pace perceived;
So your sweet hue, which methinks still doth stand,
Hath motion, and mine eye may be deceived:
For fear of which, hear this, thou age unbred;
Ere you were born was beauty's summer dead.

10

CV

Let not my love be call'd idolatry,
Nor my beloved as an idol show,

civ, 3-7 *Three winters cold . . . Junes burn'd*] An intimation that the poet's friendship was three years old. The period seems to have been more or less conventional among the sonneteers. Cf. Ronsard's *Sonnets pour Hélène*, I, xiv, which begins: "*Trois ans sont ja passez que ton œil me tient pris*," and Daniel in *Sonnets after Astrophel*, 1591, No. xvii (of his love): "That was with blood and *three years'* witness signed." For "summer's pride" (line 4) cf. *Rom. and Jul.*, I, ii, 10: "*summers . . . in their pride*."

9-10 *like a dial-hand, Steal*] Cf. lvii, 7, *supra*: "*thy dial's shady stealth*," and *Rich. III*, III, vii, 168: "*the stealing hours of time*."

cv, 1-2 *idolatry . . . idol*] "Idolatry" is only used five times elsewhere by Shakespeare. "Idolatrous" is used once in *All's Well*, I, i, 91 (*idolatrous* fancy). Tasso in Sonnet cxxvi (*Works*, ed. Solerti, ii, p. 201) likens his lady-loves to "*idoli*" (line 11) and his passion to "*ingiusta idolatria d'amore*" (line 14). Tasso also describes himself in relation with his beloved first patron, the Duke of Ferrara, as "*almost an idolater*" (Tasso's *Opere*, Pisa, 1831-1832, vol. xiii, p. 298).

SONNETS

Since all alike my songs and praises be
To one, of one, still such, and ever so.
Kind is my love to-day, to-morrow kind,
Still constant in a wondrous excellence;
Therefore my verse to constancy confined,
One thing expressing, leaves out difference.
“Fair, kind, and true,” is all my argument,
“Fair, kind, and true,” varying to other words; 10
And in this change is my invention spent,
Three themes in one, which wondrous scope affords.
“Fair, kind, and true,” have often lived alone,
Which three till now never kept seat in one.

CVI

When in the chronicle of wasted time
I see descriptions of the fairest wights,
And beauty making beautiful old rhyme
In praise of ladies dead and lovely knights,
Then, in the blazon of sweet beauty's best,
Of hand, of foot, of lip, of eye, of brow,
I see their antique pen would have express'd
Even such a beauty as you master now.

9 “*Fair, kind, and true*”] “*Wise, fair and true*” make up, according to Lorenzo, the threefold virtue of his ideal mistress Jessica (*Merch. of Ven.*, II, vi, 52-57).

CVI, 5-6 *in the blazon . . . of brow*] Cf. *Tw. Night*, I, v, 276-277: “Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions and spirit, Do give thee five-fold blazon.” “Blazon” is the technical description of the heraldic shield.

7-8 *I see . . . master now*] Cf. Spenser's sonnet to Lord Howard of Effingham (in *Faerie Queene*, 1590): “Make you ensample to the present age Of th' old Heroes whose famous offspring The *antique* Poets wont so much to sing.”

SONNETS

So all their praises are but prophecies
Of this our time, all you prefiguring; 10
And, for they look'd but with divining eyes,
They had not skill enough your worth to sing:
 For we, which now behold these present days,
 Have eyes to wonder, but lack tongues to praise.

CVII

Not mine own fears, nor the prophetic soul
Of the wide world dreaming on things to come,
Can yet the lease of my true love control,
Supposed as forfeit to a confined doom.

9-12 *So all their praises . . . your worth to sing*] Henry Constable in his *Miscellaneous Sonnets* (No. VII) written about 1590 (see Hazlitt's ed., 1859, p. 27) — not in his *Diana* — anticipated these lines thus:

“Miracle of the world, I never will deny
That former poets praise the beauty of their days;
But all those beauties were but figures of thy praise,
And all those poets did of thee but prophecy.”

Constable significantly headed this sonnet: “To his Mistrisse, upon occasion of a Petrarch he gave her, showing her the reason why the Italian commentators dissent so much in the exposition thereof.”

12 *skill*] Malone's substitution for the Quarto *still*.

CVII, 1 *the prophetic soul*] Cf. *Hamlet*, I, v, 40, and note.

4 *Supposed . . . doom*] Apparently an allusion to the doom or punishment of confinement or imprisonment awarded to Shakespeare's patron the Earl of Southampton, for complicity in the Earl of Essex's rebellion of 1601, and to his restoration to liberty on the accession of James I in 1603. Samuel Daniel, John Davies of Hereford, and other poets celebrated Southampton's enfranchisement in like terms. Cf. Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*, p. 152.

SONNETS

The mortal moon hath her eclipse endured,
 And the sad augurs mock their own presage;
 Incertainties now crown themselves assured,
 And peace proclaims olives of endless age.
 Now with the drops of this most balmy time
 My love looks fresh, and Death to me subscribes, 10
 Since, spite of him, I'll live in this poor rhyme,
 While he insults o'er dull and speechless tribes:
 And thou in this shalt find thy monument,
 When tyrants' crests and tombs of brass are spent.

5 *The mortal . . . endured*] Queen Elizabeth, whom Spenser, Raleigh, Barnfield, and other poets of the day habitually named Cynthia (*i. e.*, the moon), died March 24, 1603. Poetic elegists invariably lamented her death in like phraseology; *e. g.*, "Fair Cynthia's dead"; "Luna's extinct"; "Nought can eclipse her light"; "Her sun eclipsed did set."

6 *And the sad augurs mock their own presage*] Anticipation of disorder on Queen Elizabeth's death was general in London, but was belied by the event. Cf. Manningham's *Diary* (Camd. Soc. 147): "garhoiles . . . were more feared than perceived . . . Noe tumult, noe contradiction, noe disorder in the city . . . God be thanked, our King has his right." So Daniel in his *Panegyrick* to James I, 1603, st. xiii-xiv.

8 *And peace . . . endless age*] James I, whose love of peace was notorious, was said to reach his throne "not with an *olive* branch in his hand, but with a whole forest of *olives* round about him, for he brought not *peace* to this kingdom alone" (Gervase Markham, *Honour in his Perfection*, 1624).

9 *this most balmy time*] James I ascended the throne in a spring of rarely rivalled clemency — "this sweetest of all sweet springs." Cf. Daniel's *Panegyrick*, st. xvii, and Davies' *Microcosmos* (1603, ed. Grosart, p. 15), pref. in honour of King James.

10 *subscribes*] yields: a common usage.

12 *he insults o'er . . . tribes*] he triumphs over the dead.

14 *tyrants' crests*] Cf. lv, 1 *seq.*, *supra*.

SONNETS

CVIII

What 's in the brain, that ink may character,
Which hath not figured to thee my true spirit?
What 's new, to speak, what new to register,
That may express my love, or thy dear merit?
Nothing, sweet boy; but yet, like prayers divine,
I must each day say o'er the very same;
Counting no old thing old, thou mine, I thine,
Even as when first I hallowed thy fair name.
So that eternal love in love's fresh case
Weighs not the dust and injury of age, 10
Nor gives to necessary wrinkles place,
But makes antiquity for aye his page;
 Finding the first conceit of love there bred,
 Where time and outward form would show it dead.

CIX

O, never say that I was false of heart,
Though absence seem'd my flame to qualify.
As easy might I from myself depart

CVIII, 3 *new to register*] Malone's correction of the Quarto reading *now to register*.

9 *in love's fresh case*] in the case of love which is ever fresh or young.

10 *Weighs not*] Cf. *L. L. L.*, V, ii, 27: "You weigh me not?—O, that's you care not for me."

14 *Where time . . . show it dead*] In a person whose age and outward appearance would seem to show that the sentiment of love was dead in him.

CIX, 2 *qualify*] diminish, allay. Cf. *Lucrece*, 424, and note.

SONNETS

As from my soul, which in thy breast doth lie:
That is my home of love: if I have ranged,
Like him that travels, I return again;
Just to the time, not with the time exchanged,
So that myself bring water for my stain.
Never believe, though in my nature reign'd
All frailties that besiege all kinds of blood,
That it could so preposterously be stain'd,
To leave for nothing all thy sum of good;
For nothing this wide universe I call,
Save thou, my rose; in it thou art my all.

10

CX

Alas, 't is true I have gone here and there,
And made myself a motley to the view,

4 *from my soul . . . doth lie*] Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 580–582: “her [Venus’s] heart . . . He [Adonis] carries thence incaged *in his breast*,” and *L. L. L.*, V, ii, 804: “my heart is *in thy breast*.” Cf. *Rich. III*, I, ii, 204.

5–6 *That is my home . . . return again*] Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, III, ii, 171–172: “My heart to her but as *guest-wise sojourn’d*, And now to Helen is it *home return’d*.”

7–8 *Just to the time . . . stain*] Just to the minute, quite punctually, not altered by the interval of absence, so that in my own person I make reparation for any offence of absence.

10 *all kinds of blood*] all sorts of temperaments.

14 *Save thou*] Apart from thee.

CX, 2 *a motley*] a fool who habitually wore a patchwork or motley coat. The poet is imagined by commentators to reproach himself obscurely here with the folly of his profession of actor (cf. xxiii, 1, *supra*). But Spenser (*Amoretti*, liv) identifies himself, wholly in a figurative sense, with a player whose varied impersonations his mistress watches, like a spectator in a theatre.

SONNETS

Gored mine own thoughts, sold cheap what is most dear,
Made old offences of affections new;
Most true it is that I have look'd on truth
Askance and strangely: but, by all above,
These blenches gave my heart another youth,
And worse essays proved thee my best of love.
Now all is done, have what shall have no end:
Mine appetite I never more will grind
On newer proof, to try an older friend,
A god in love, to whom I am confined.

10

Then give me welcome, next my heaven the best,
Even to thy pure and most most loving breast.

CXI

O, for my sake do you with Fortune chide,
The guilty goddess of my harmful deeds,
That did not better for my life provide
Than public means which public manners breeds.

3 *Gored*] Outraged, disgraced. Cf. *Hamlet*, V, ii, 242: "To keep my name *ungored*."

4 *Made old . . . new*] Sinned against old friendships by forming new ones. There is some inversion of phraseology here but the general sense is clear.

6 *strangely*] distantly. Cf. xlix, 5, and lxxix, 7, *supra*.

7 *blenches*] aberrations, flinchings from virtue. The substantive is rare. Cf. for the verb *Hamlet*, II, ii, 593: "if he but *blench*."

8 *worse essays*] trials of more disreputable conduct.

9 *have what shall have no end*] Cf. Shakespeare's dedication of *Lucrece* to Lord Southampton: "the love I dedicate to your lordship is *without end*." See *Sonnet* xxvi, *supra*.

CXI, 4 *Than public means . . . breeds*] The phrase is commonly assumed to imply scorn of the poet's profession of actor.

SONNETS

Thence comes it that my name receives a brand,
And almost thence my nature is subdued
To what it works in, like the dyer's hand:
Pity me then and wish I were renew'd;
Whilst, like a willing patient, I will drink
Potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection; 10
No bitterness that I will bitter think,
Nor double penance, to correct correction.
Pity me then, dear friend, and I assure ye
Even that your pity is enough to cure me.

CXII

Your love and pity doth the impression fill
Which vulgar scandal stamp'd upon my brow;
For what care I who calls me well or ill,
So you o'er-green my bad, my good allow?
You are my all the world, and I must strive
To know my shames and praises from your tongue;
None else to me, nor I to none alive,
That my steel'd sense or changes right or wrong.

5 *a brand*] a stigma of disgrace.

10 *eisel*] vinegar, which was held to be a sovereign protection against infection of the plague. Cf. *Hamlet*, V, i, 270, and note.

CXII, 4 *o'er-green my bad . . . allow*] throw a friendly veil over my faults and approve my virtues. "*O'er-green*," a rare word, probably alludes to the covering of rough ground with greensward.

7-8 *None else . . . wrong*] Nobody else is anything to me nor I anything to anybody else who is likely to endow my hardened sensibility or my vacillations of temper with any sense of right or wrong. Nobody else can influence me for good or ill.

SONNETS

In so profound abysm I throw all care
Of others' voices, that my adder's sense 10
To critic and to flatterer stopped are.
Mark how with my neglect I do dispense:
 You are so strongly in my purpose bred
 That all the world besides methinks are dead.

CXIII

Since I left you mine eye is in my mind,
And that which governs me to go about
Doth part his function and is partly blind,
Seems seeing, but effectually is out;
For it no form delivers to the heart
Of bird, of flower, or shape, which it doth latch:

10 *my adder's sense*] my deaf ears. Cf. *Troil. and Cress.*, II, ii, 172:
 "ears more deaf than adders."

11 *critic*] censurer; always thus in Shakespeare.

12 *with my neglect I do dispense*] I excuse any neglect. "Dispense with"
 (*i. e.*, obtain dispensation for); thrice so in *Lucrece* (1070, 1279,
 1704).

13 *in my purpose bred*] rooted in my thought.

14 *besides methinks are dead*] Thus Malone. The Quarto reads, "*besides
methinkes y' are dead*," which is unintelligible.

CXIII, 1 *mine eye is in my mind*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 1426: "the eye of mind,"
 and *Hamlet*, I, ii, 185: "In my mind's eye."

3 *part*] depart from, forsake: no uncommon usage.

4 *is out*] is out of the right path; strays into error. Cf. *L. L. L.*, IV, i, 126:
 "your hand *is out*," and *Tw. Night*, II, iii, 173: "I am a foul way
 out."

5-6 *For it no form . . . 'it doth latch*] Cf. liii, *supra*. These lines expand
 Petrarch's beautiful Canzone xv, headed "In ogni cosa trova il Poeta
 l' imagine di Laura," where the poet detects his mistress's form in every

SONNETS

Of his quick objects hath the mind no part,
 Nor his own vision holds what it doth catch;
 For if it see the rudest or gentlest sight,
 The most sweet favour or deformed'st creature, 10
 The mountain or the sea, the day or night,
 The crow or dove, it shapes them to your feature:
 Incapable of more, replete with you,
 My most true mind thus maketh mine untrue.

CXIV

Or whether doth my mind, being crown'd with you,
 Drink up the monarch's plague, this flattery?
 Or whether shall I say, mine eye saith true,
 And that your love taught it this alchemy,
 To make of monsters and things indigest

aspect of nature. "Latch" means "catch," "lay hold of." Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, III, ii, 36 ("But hast thou yet *latch'd* the Athenian's eyes?") and *Macb.*, IV, iii, 195.

10 *favour*] face, countenance.

14 *mine untrue*] Thus the original Quarto. The words are difficult. "Untrue" may possibly be used like a noun for "untruth," "deception." "Fair" is repeatedly, and "true" and "false" are occasionally, used as substantives. Cf. *Meas. for Meas.*, II, iv, 170: "my false o'erweighs your true." Modern editors usually substitute *mine eye untrue*, which seems a permissible change. Cf. cxiv, 3: "*mine eye saith true*," and civ, 12: "*mine eye* may be deceived." For the like ambiguity in similiar context between "mine" and "mine eye" see *Two Gent.*, II, iv, 192.

cxiv, 4-6 *love taught it this alchemy . . . sweet self resemble*] Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, I, i, 232-233: "Things base and vile holding no quantity *Love can transpose* to form and dignity."

5 *indigest*] unformed, shapeless.

SONNETS

Such cherubims as your sweet self resemble,
Creating every bad a perfect best,
As fast as objects to his beams assemble?
O, 't is the first; 't is flattery in my seeing,
And my great mind most kingly drinks it up: 10
Mine eye well knows what with his gust is 'greeing,
And to his palate doth prepare the cup:
If it be poison'd, 't is the lesser sin
That mine eye loves it and doth first begin.

CXV

Those lines that I before have writ do lie,
Even those that said I could not love you dearer:
Yet then my judgement knew no reason why
My most full flame should afterwards burn clearer.
But reckoning Time, whose million'd accidents
Creep in 'twixt vows, and change decrees of kings,
Tan sacred beauty, blunt the sharp'st intents,
Divert strong minds to the course of altering things;

9 *O, 't is the first; 't is flattery in my seeing*] Cf. *Tw. Night*, I, v, 293:
“*Mine eye too great a flatterer for my mind.*” The poet has offered two
alternative explanations of his finding his friend's fair shape in every
aspect of nature and accepts “the first” solution that his eye is
flattering his mind. He rejects the second theory that nature is
genuinely beautified by love's alchemy.

11 *his gust*] its (*i. e.*, the eye's) taste.

13 *If it be poison'd*] An allusion to the perils lurking in princes' cups (line
10). Cf. *K. John*, V, vi, 28: “who did *taste* to him?” (*i. e.*, to the
poisoned king). So *England's Helicon* (ed. Bullen, p. 37): “Golden
cups do harbour poison.”

CXV, 7 *Tan*] Discolour, spoil.

SONNETS

Alas, why, fearing of Time's tyranny,
Might I not then say "Now I love you best," 10
When I was certain o'er uncertainty,
Crowning the present, doubting of the rest?
Love is a babe; then might I not say so,
To give full growth to that which still doth grow?

CXVI

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.

11-12 *certain . . . present*] Cf. cvii, 7: "*Incertainties* now crown themselves assured."

cxvi, 1 *marriage*] union. Cf. lxxx, 1, *supra*. "Impediments" (line 2) suggests the words in the marriage service: "If any of you know cause or just *impediment*," etc.

2-3 *Love is not love . . . finds*] Cf. *Lear*, I, i, 238-239: "Love's not love When it is mingled with regards."

4 *Or bends . . . to remove*] Or inclines to inconstancy at the call of the one who changes (or who is fickle). Cf. xxv, 13-14: "Then happy I that love and am beloved Where I may not *remove* nor be *removed*," and note there.

5-6 *it is an ever-fixed mark . . . never shaken*] Cf. *Cor.*, V, iii, 74: "Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw."

8 *Whose worth's . . . be taken*] The star's beneficial influence is incalculable, although its altitude or elevation and position in the sky may be calculated for purposes of navigation.

SONNETS

Love 's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come; 10
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
 If this be error and upon me proved,
 I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

CXVII

Accuse me thus: that I have scanted all
Wherein I should your great deserts repay,
Forgot upon your dearest love to call,
Whereto all bonds do tie me day by day;
That I have frequent been with unknown minds,
And given to time your own dear-purchased right;
That I have hoisted sail to all the winds
Which should transport me farthest from your sight.
Book both my wilfulness and errors down,
And on just proof surmise accumulate; 10

9 *Love 's not Time's fool*] Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, V, iv, 81: "But thought's the slave of life, and *life time's fool*" (*i. e.*, Time's plaything).

11 *his brief hours*] Time's brief hours.

12 *bears it out even to . . . doom*] endures to the brink of the last judgment. Cf. *All 's Well*, III, iii, 5-6: "to bear it To the extreme edge of hazard."

CXVII, 4 *Whereto all bonds do tie me*] For the legal pun on "bonds" cf. Barnes' *Parthenophil* (1593), xi, 13: "And if in *bonds* to thee *my love be tied*."

5 *unknown minds*] persons not worth the knowing. Cf. xliii, 2: "things unrespected."

6 *given to time . . . right*] squandered your rights in me (by wasting my time on others). Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, II, iii, 42-43: "And *given* my treasures and *my rights of thee* To thick-eyed musing."

SONNETS

Bring me within the level of your frown,
But shoot not at me in your waken'd hate;
Since my appeal says I did strive to prove
The constancy and virtue of your love.

CXVIII

Like as, to make our appetites more keen,
With eager compounds we our palate urge;
As, to prevent our maladies unseen,
We sicken to shun sickness when we purge;
Even so, being full of your ne'er-cloying sweetness,
To bitter sauces did I frame my feeding;
And sick of welfare found a kind of meetness
To be diseased, ere that there was true needing.
Thus policy in love, to anticipate
The ills that were not, grew to faults assured, 10
And brought to medicine a healthful state,
Which, rank of goodness, would by ill be cured:

13-14 *I did strive . . . of your love*] Cf. cx, 10-11, *supra*.

CXVIII, 2 *eager*] sharp, bitter, appetising.

3 *to prevent*] to anticipate.

7 *sick of welfare*] Cf. 2 *Hen. IV*, IV, i, 64: "To diet rank minds *sick of happiness*." See line 12, and note, *infra*.

9-14 *Thus policy . . . sick of you*] Thus love's policy in the endeavour to anticipate the evils of an expected satiety brought on positive maladies; it submitted to medical treatment a healthy condition, which overflowing in robustness foolishly sought benefit from disagreeable medicaments. In the result the drugs poisoned the poet, who, surfeited with his affection, thought to cure himself of its anticipated evils.

12 *rank of goodness*] surfeited with or overflowing in good health. Cf. line 7, *supra*: "sick of welfare"; *Ant. and Cleop.*, V, ii, 211:

SONNETS

But thence I learn, and find the lesson true,
Drugs poison him that so fell sick of you.

CXIX

What potions have I drunk of Siren tears,
Distill'd from limbecks foul as hell within,
Applying fears to hopes and hopes to fears,
Still losing when I saw myself to win!
What wretched errors hath my heart committed,
Whilst it hath thought itself so blessed never!
How have mine eyes out of their spheres been fitted,
In the distraction of this madding fever!
O benefit of ill! now I find true
That better is by evil still made better;
And ruin'd love, when it is built anew,
Grows fairer than at first, more strong, far greater.

10

“Rank of gross diet”; and *Hamlet*, IV, vii, 117: “goodness growing to a pluriſy.”

CXIX, 1-2 *What potions . . . limbecks*] Cf. Barnes' *Parthenophil*, xlix, where, after denouncing his mistress as a *Siren*, the poet writes: “From my love's 'lembic [have I] still [*di*] stilled tears.” “Limbeck,” “lembic,” or “alembic” is the vessel used in distillation.

4 *Still losing . . . to win*] Cf. cxxix, 11 (of lust): “A bliss in proof, and prov'd, a very woe.”

7 *How have mine eyes . . . been fitted*] How have mine eyes started from their spheres as in a convulsive fit. Cf. *Mids. N. Dr.*, II, i, 153: “stars shot madly from their spheres,” and II, ii, 99: “sphery eyne,” and *Hamlet*, I, v, 17: “Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres.”

10 *better is by evil . . . better*] Cf. *As you like it*, II, i, 12: “Sweet are the uses of adversity.”

11 *ruin'd love . . . built anew*] Cf. *Com. of Errors*, III, ii, 4: “Shall love
[109]

SONNETS

So I return rebuked to my content,
And gain by ill thrice more than I have spent.

CXX

That you were once unkind befriends me now,
And for that sorrow which I then did feel
Needs must I under my transgression bow,
Unless my nerves were brass or hammer'd steel.
For if you were by my unkindness shaken,
As I by yours, you've pass'd a hell of time;
And I, a tyrant, have no leisure taken
To weigh how once I suffer'd in your crime.
O, that our night of woe might have remember'd
My deepest sense, how hard true sorrow hits, 10
And soon to you, as you to me, then tender'd
The humble salve which wounded bosoms fits!
But that your trespass now becomes a fee;
Mine ransoms yours, and yours must ransom me.

in building, grow so *ruinous?*" and *Troil. and Cress.*, IV, ii, 102: "the strong base and *building of my love.*" The figure, which identifies love with a building or "mansion" which is likely to grow "ruinous" unless subjected to "repair," is fully expounded in *Two Gent.*, V, iv, 7-11.

CXX, 6 *you've pass'd a hell of time*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 1287-1288: "And that deep torture may be call'd a *hell*, Where more is felt than one hath power to tell"; see also *Rich. III*, I, iv, 62, and *Othello*, V, ii, 140.

9 *our night of woe*] "Our" suggests the combined association (with "the night of woe") of the poet who caused it and the friend who suffered from it.

9-10 *might have . . . sense*] might have reminded my inmost soul. For this causative use of "remember'd" cf. *Wint. Tale*, III, ii, 227, and *Lear*, I, iv, 64.

SONNETS

CXXI

'T is better to be vile than vile esteemed,
When not to be receives reproach of being;
And the just pleasure lost, which is so deemed
Not by our feeling but by others' seeing:
For why should others' false adulterate eyes
Give salutation to my sportive blood?
Or on my frailties why are frailer spies,
Which in their wills count bad what I think good?
No, I am that I am, and they that level
At my abuses reckon up their own: 10
I may be straight, though they themselves be bevel;
By their rank thoughts my deeds must not be shown;
Unless this general evil they maintain,
All men are bad and in their badness reign.

CXXI, 2 *When not to be . . . being*] When not to be vile (*i. e.*, being virtuous) receives the reproach of being vile.

3-4 *And the just pleasure lost . . . others' seeing*] And all sense of pleasure is lost in an action which, although one knows it to be virtuous and lawful, is unjustly held by the world to be vile.

6 *Give salutation . . . blood*] Stir (by greeting) or stimulate my wanton blood. Cf. *Hen. VIII*, II, iii, 103: "If this *salute my blood* a jot."

8 *in their wills*] at will, at their good pleasure. Cf. lvii, 13: "*in your will*," and note. For the varied meanings of "will" see cxxxv, 1.

9 *I am that I am*] Cf. *3 Hen. VI*, V, vi, 83: "I am myself alone," and *Othello*, I, i, 66: "I am not what I am."

level] aim. Cf. cxvii, 11, *supra*.

11 *bevel*] crooked, out of the square; a term from carpentry.

13 *this general evil*] this general or universal principle of evil.

SONNETS

CXXII

Thy gift, thy tables, are within my brain
Full character'd with lasting memory,
Which shall above that idle rank remain,
Beyond all date, even to eternity;
Or, at the least, so long as brain and heart
Have faculty by nature to subsist;
Till each to razed oblivion yield his part
Of thee, thy record never can be miss'd.
That poor retention could not so much hold,
Nor need I tallies thy dear love to score;
Therefore to give them from me was I bold,
To trust those tables that receive thee more:
 To keep an adjunct to remember thee
 Were to import forgetfulness in me.

10

CXXII, 1 *Thy gift, thy tables*] Apparently the reference is to the friend's gift to the poet of a memorandum book which the latter had given away (line 11). In lxxvii, *supra*, the poet would seem to have made the same kind of present to the friend.

2 *Full character'd . . . memory*] Cf. *Two Gent.*, II, vii, 3-4: "the table wherein all my thoughts Are visibly *character'd*" [*i. e.*, inscribed]. So *Hamlet*, I, iii, 58, and I, v, 98: "the *table* of my memory."

3 *above that idle rank*] above the dignity of such humble objects as tables or memorandum books.

5-6 *so long . . . to subsist*] Cf. *Hamlet*, I, v, 96.

9 *That poor retention . . . hold*] That poor instrument for retaining memoranda could not hold my large description of thee.

10 *tallies*] sticks on which notches were scored for the purpose of keeping accounts. The word is used by Shakespeare elsewhere only in *2 Hen. VI*, IV, vii, 33.

14 *import*] impute.

SONNETS

CXXIII

No, Time, thou shalt not boast that I do change:
Thy pyramids built up with newer might
To me are nothing novel, nothing strange;
They are but dressings of a former sight.
Our dates are brief, and therefore we admire
What thou dost foist upon us that is old;
And rather make them born to our desire
Than think that we before have heard them told.

CXXIII, 2 *Thy pyramids . . . newer might*] Time's great structures built with ever-increasing solidity.

4 *They are but dressings of a former sight*] They are but rehabilitations of what has been seen or has existed in former times. Here Shakespeare draws further on that doctrine of the indestructibility of matter in spite of its outward mutability which Ovid expounds in his *Metam.*, bk. xv. Cf. Golding's translation, 1612 ed., p. 185 b:

"Things eb and flow: euen so the tymes by kind
Do flee and follow both at once, and euermore renew;"

and p. 186 b:

"No kind of thing keepes ay his shape and hew:
For nature louing euer change, repayres one shape anew
Upon another, neither doth there perish ought (trust mee)
In all the world, but altring takes new shape."

Shakespeare repeatedly lays the same passage in Ovid under contribution (cf. xv, lix, lxiii, lxiv, and lxv). Spenser previously expounded the like doctrine in his *Faerie Queene*, III, vi. st. 37 *seq.*:

"The substance is not chaunged nor altered
But th' only forme and outward fashion."

7 *And rather . . . to our desire*] And rather cherish the impression that things really old are newly created to give us pleasure.

SONNETS

Thy registers and thee I both defy,
Not wondering at the present nor the past,
For thy records and what we see doth lie,
Made more or less by thy continual haste.

10

 This I do vow, and this shall ever be,
 I will be true, despite thy scythe and thee.

CXXIV

If my dear love were but the child of state,
It might for Fortune's bastard be unfather'd,
As subject to Time's love or to Time's hate,
Weeds among weeds, or flowers with flowers gather'd.
No, it was builded far from accident;
It suffers not in smiling pomp, nor falls
Under the blow of thrall'd discontent,
Whereto the inviting time our fashion calls:

11 *doth lie*] the verb in the singular with a subject ("thy records and what we see") in the plural. The deceptions of growth and decay practised on us by Time's records and our own visions are due to the endless variability of indestructible matter. Nothing is new nor old.

CXXIV, 1 *the child of state*] the child of circumstance, which is always changing.

2 *unfather'd*] without an acknowledged father.

7-8 *thrall'd discontent . . . calls*] a possible vague allusion to the social and political unrest which distinguished alike the last decade of Elizabeth's reign and the first decade of James I's reign. Unemployment and Catholic plots against the throne were the chief causes of disquiet. The former source of "discontent," which produced much agrarian disturbance, might well bear the epithet "thrall'd."

SONNETS

It fears not policy, that heretic,
Which works on leases of short-number'd hours, 10
But all alone stands hugely politic,
That it nor grows with heat nor drowns with showers.
 To this I witness call the fools of time,
 Which die for goodness, who have lived for crime.

CXXV

Were 't aught to me I bore the canopy,
With my extern the outward honouring,
Or laid great bases for eternity,
Which prove more short than waste or ruining?

9-10 *policy, that heretic . . . short-number'd hours*] "Policy" means "intrigue," "underhand dealing." There is a possible reference to the short-sighted political intrigues of the "heretic" Papists who under the Jesuit Parsons' guidance were specially active during the last of Queen Elizabeth's reign in eager anticipation of her early death.

11 *hugely politic*] infinitely wise and prudent. "Politic," although often used by Shakespeare in a bad sense (like *policy*, line 9, *supra*), has here its good sense.

12 *grows with heat*] Thus the original Quarto. Steevens substituted *glows with heat*. But expanse or increase is an ordinary effect of heat.

13 *the fools of time*] the playthings of time; men of whom time takes no serious account. Cf. cxvi, 3, *supra*: "Love's not *Time's* fool."

14 *Which die . . . for crime*] Penitent traitors, who expiated their crimes with piety on the scaffold. The words would apply to any political or religious conspirator against the throne who suffered capital punishment in Shakespeare's day. All met their death with prayer and pious courage. To this fact the poet ironically directs attention by way of indicating that their lives, unlike his unalterable affection were profitless because they were inconstant or inconsistent.

CXXV, 1-2 *Were 't aught to me . . . honouring*] Would it have been any benefit to me that I should take part in the formal ceremony of

SONNETS

Have I not seen dwellers on form and favour
Lose all, and more, by paying too much rent,
For compound sweet forgoing simple savour,
Pitiful thrivers, in their gazing spent?
No, let me be obsequious in thy heart,
And take thou my oblation, poor but free, 10
Which is not mix'd with seconds, knows no art
But mutual render, only me for thee.

honour (in merely holding up "the canopy"), being merely sensible of the outward forms or semblance, with no inward sincerity? Cf. *Othello*, I, i, 62-64: "when my *outward* action doth demonstrate The native act and figure of my heart In *compliment extern*." The poet is repudiating the insinuation that he honoured his beloved patron with mere insincere lip-service and flimsy promises of eternalising his fame.

- 5-6 *dwellers on form and favour . . . too much rent*] those eulogists who, laying excessive emphasis on an adored patron's fine figure and good looks, forfeit his favour, and worse, by overdoing their obligations.
- 7 *compound . . . simple*] The implied contrast between *compound* and *simple* interest points again at the extravagant compliment which the pitiful poetic sycophant substitutes for simple writing in vain hope of added lucre.
- 9 *let me be obsequious in*] let me pay due reverence or devotion to. See xxxi, 5, *supra*, and note. With the tenor of the context cf. Drayton's *Idea*, 1599, No. xlix: "Receive the incense which I offer here . . . My soul's *oblations* to thy sacred Name!"
- 11 *is not mix'd with seconds*] is of the finest quality. "Seconds" (*i. e.*, coarse or mixed grains) is still used as the technical name of an inferior quality of "flour"; the word is appropriate to "oblation" (line 10), an offering of grain. Sir Christopher Hatton writing to Queen Elizabeth in November, 1591, bids her "sift the chaff from the *wheat* so that the *corn* of your commonwealth would be more *pure*, and *mixt grains* would less infect the sinews of your surety." (See Nicolas' *Life*, p. 497.)

SONNETS

Hence, thou suborn'd informer! a true soul
When most impeach'd stands least in thy control.

CXXVI

O thou, my lovely boy, who in thy power
Dost hold Time's fickle glass, his sickle, hour;

13 *suborn'd informer*] Canon Beeching ingeniously suggests an apostrophe to a false accuser who has brought against the poet a charge of insincerity which the opening lines of this sonnet repel. Desportes very similarly apostrophises "*rapporteurs dangereux*" who spread "ce méchant bruit" that his mistress "fait nouveau change" (*Diane*, II, xxxviii). Jealousy commonly inspires false witness against lovers' sincerity and is apostrophised as "sour informer" (*Venus and Adonis*, 655), and as "provoker and maintainer of vain lies" (Barnes' *Parthenophil*, lxxxi). A jealous rival-poet may be assumed to be the "suborn'd informer" here.

CXXVI This poem was omitted from Shakespeare's "Poems" of 1640. It is not in the sonnet form, being twelve lines in couplets. So-called "sonnets" in twelve lines figure in Lodge's *Phyllis* (1593), viii, xxvi; Linche's *Diella* (1596), xiii, and W. Smith's *Chloris* (1596), xxvii (in couplets). In the Quarto of 1609 there appeared at the end of this "sonnet" two pairs of brackets, one above the other, enclosing blank spaces, an indication on the part of the printer that he expected to fill in later the thirteenth and fourteenth lines. But the construction of the poem in couplets justified no such expectation. Nor can it be fairly argued that the empty brackets, a mere typographical misconception, were designed to denote the close of the first section of sonnets addressed to a man and the opening of the second section addressed to a woman. Internal and other evidence supports no such clear-cut bisection of Shakespeare's *Sonnets*.

2 *Time's fickle glass . . . hour*] Cf. Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, vii, viii, st. 1, lines 8-9: (Of life) "Whose flowring pride so fading and so fickle Short time shall soon cut down with his consuming sickle."

SONNETS

Who hast by waning grown, and therein show'st
 Thy lovers withering as thy sweet self grow'st;
 If Nature, sovereign mistress over wrack,
 As thou goest onwards, still will pluck thee back,
 She keeps thee to this purpose, that her skill
 May time disgrace and wretched minutes kill.
 Yet fear her, O thou minion of her pleasure!
 She may detain, but not still keep, her treasure: 10
 Her audit, though delay'd, answer'd must be,
 And her quietus is to render thee.

3 *Who hast by waning grown*] Another reminiscence of Ovid's philosophy (*Metam.*, xv) touching the ceaseless "eb and flow" of "Dame Nature" as qualified by Time. See xv, lxiii, lxiv, lxv, and cxxiii, *supra*. Cf. Golding's translation (1612 ed., p. 185 b): "Things eb and flow . . . Do flee and follow both at once and euermore renew."

5-8 *Nature, sovereign mistress . . . wretched minutes kill*] Shakespeare, playfully adapting Ovid's doctrine of "growth by waning," follows the Latin poet in making "Dame Nature," by exercise of "*cunning hand*"—"artifices manus" in the Latin (cf. line 7, "her skill")—cherish youth at the outset in defiance of Time, "eater up of things." All Nature's efforts to discredit Time's power are, however, doomed to futility. Her mutations mean destruction of individual youth. "And when that long continuance hath them [*i. e.*, living things] bit, You [*i. e.*, Time] leisurely by lingering death consume them every whit."

9-10 *O thou minion . . . treasure*] The "lovely boy" who monopolises nature's affection must in due course succumb to time's inexorable law of death. The tone of address does not harmonise with the theory that the "fickle boy" and "Nature's *minion*" is identical with the poet's friend of former sonnets. The poem, while subsidised by Ovid's philosophy, is in the vein of many lyrical apostrophes of the boy Cupid. Cf. Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnet xvii, where Nature is called Cupid's "pitying grandame."

11-12 *Her audit . . . render thee*] Nature must make a settlement of

SONNETS

CXXVII

In the old age black was not counted fair,
 Or if it were, it bore not beauty's name;
 But now is black beauty's successive heir,
 And beauty slander'd with a bastard shame:
 For since each hand hath put on nature's power,
 Fairing the foul with art's false borrow'd face,
 Sweet beauty hath no name, no holy bower,
 But is profaned, if not lives in disgrace.
 Therefore my mistress' eyes are raven black,
 Her eyes so suited, and they mourners seem

10

her accounts with Time, though it may be delayed, and she will get her acquittance or formal discharge only when she surrenders thee. For "quietus" cf. *Hamlet*, III, i, 75.

CXXVII, 1 *In the old age . . . fair*] The praise of a dark complexion is ridiculed in *L. L. L.*, IV, iii, 262 *seq.*: DUM. "To look like her are chimney-sweepers black. LONG. And since her time are colliers counted bright. KING. And Ethiopes of their sweet complexion crack. DUM. Dark needs no candles now, for dark is light." Similarly at a slightly earlier date in France "the praise of black" was renounced by sonneteers. Cf. Jodelle's *Contr' Amours*, Sonnet vii: "Combien de fois mes vers ont-ils doré *Ces cheveux noirs dignes d'une Meduse?* Combien de fois *ce teint noir* qui m'amuse, Ay-ie de lis et roses coloré?" Shakespeare pursues the theme in cxxxi and cxxxii, *infra*.
 3 *successive heir*] lawful successor.

6 *art's false borrow'd face*] a reference to the disguising art of toilet cosmetics for dyeing hair and colouring the face. Cf. lxvii and lxviii, *supra*.

9 *my mistress' eyes*] Thus the Quarto. It seems reasonable to substitute *my mistress's brows*, in order to avoid the repetition of *eyes* in the next line.

10 *suited*] clothed.

SONNETS

At such who, not born fair, no beauty lack,
Slandering creation with a false esteem :
 Yet so they mourn, becoming of their woe,
 That every tongue says beauty should look so.

CXXVIII

How oft, when thou, my music, music play'st,
Upon that blessed wood whose motion sounds
With thy sweet fingers, when thou gently sway'st
The wiry concord that mine ear confounds,
Do I envy those jacks that nimble leap
To kiss the tender inward of thy hand,

11-12 *who, not born fair . . . a false esteem*] who not being born fair yet possess every artificial beauty, thereby dishonouring nature by their spurious reputation for beauty.

13 *Yet so they mourn . . . their woe*] "Becoming of their woe" means "adorning or gracing their woe." Cf. cl. 5. For the general sentiment cf. Sidney's *Astrophel and Stella*, Sonnet vii, where the beams of a mistress' eyes are "wrapped in colour black," and wear "this mourning weed" so "That whereas black seems beauty's contrary: She even in black doth make all beauties flow." Sidney's "mourning" image is more precisely reproduced throughout cxxxii, *infra*.

cxxviii, 1-9 *How oft, when thou . . . those jacks . . . To be so tickled*] Cf. *Tit. Andr.*, II, iv, 46: "And make the silken strings delight to kiss them" [*i. e.*, the lady's fingers playing on the lute]. See also Ben Jonson's *Every Man out of his Humour*, Act III, Scene iii, where Fastidious says of Saviolina playing the "viol de gambo": "You see the subject of her *sweet fingers* there — O she *tickles* it so, that . . . I have wished myself to be that instrument, I think, a thousand times."

5 *those jacks*] like "dancing chips" (line 10) and "saucy jacks" (line 13), the keys of the spinet or virginal, an elementary form of pianoforte.

Cf. *Ram Alley*, 1611 (Dodsley's *Old Plays*, X, 346): "virginal *jacks*."

6 *tender inward*] delicate inside.

SONNETS

Whilst my poor lips, which should that harvest reap,
At the wood's boldness by thee blushing stand!
To be so tickled, they would change their state
And situation with those dancing chips, 10
O'er whom thy fingers walk with gentle gait,
Making dead wood more blest than living lips.
 Since saucy jacks so happy are in this,
 Give them thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss.

CXXIX

The expense of spirit in a waste of shame
Is lust in action; and till action, lust
Is perjured, murderous, bloody, full of blame,
Savage, extreme, rude, cruel, not to trust;
Enjoy'd no sooner but despised straight;
Past reason hunted; and no sooner had,
Past reason hated, as a swallowed bait,
On purpose laid to make the taker mad:
Mad in pursuit, and in possession so;
Had, having, and in quest to have, extreme; 10

11-12 *O'er whom . . . living lips*] Cf. Constable's *Miscellaneous Sonnets*, v (ed. Hazlitt, p. 26): "A lute of *senselesse wood* by nature dumbe *Toucht by thy hand* doth speake *divinely well*."

CXXIX The ravages of lust is a favourite topic with sonneteers. Cf. Sidney's penultimate sonnet in the appendix to *Astrophel and Stella*: "Thou blind man's mark, thou fool's self chosen snare," and *Emaricdulfe*, sonnets written by E. C., 1595, No. xxxvii: "O lust, of sacred love the foule corrupter." See also *Venus and Adonis*, 799-804, and *Lucrece*, 687-735.

1 *The expense*] The expenditure or spending.

SONNETS

A bliss in proof, and proved, a very woe;
Before, a joy proposed; behind, a dream,
 All this the world well knows; yet none knows well
 To shun the heaven that leads men to this hell.

CXXX

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;
Coral is far more red than her lips' red:
If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;
If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head.
I have seen roses damask'd, red and white,
But no such roses see I in her cheeks;
And in some perfumes is there more delight
Than in the breath that from my mistress reeks.

11 *proved, a very woe*] Malone's correction of the Quarto reading *proud and very woe*.

CXXX Satiric allusion is made here to the extravagant imagery of contemporary sonnets, notably of those in which the mistress' features were compared to the sun or the stars or precious stones. See *Sonnet xxi, supra*. Shakespeare would seem to be ridiculing especially Lodge's *Phyllis* (1593), *Sonnet viii*: "No stars her eyes to clear the wandering night, But shining suns of true divinity . . . No coral is her lip, no rose her fair."

4 *If hairs be wires*] "Wires" in the sense of hair was distinctive of the sonneteer's affected vocabulary. Cf. Daniel's *Delia* (1591), xxvi: "And golden hairs may change to silver wire"; Lodge's *Phyllis* (1593), ix: "Made blush the beauties of her curled wire"; Barnes' *Parthenophil*, *Sonnet xlvi*: "Her hairs no grace of golden wires want."

5 *damask'd, red and white*] Cf. *As you like it*, III, v, 122: "mingled damask."

8 *the breath . . . reeks*] Cf. Constable's *Diana*, Decade i, *Sonnet ix*: "From her sweet breath their [*i. e.*, the flowers'] sweet smells do proceed."

SONNETS

I love to hear her speak, yet well I know
That music hath a far more pleasing sound: 10
I grant I never saw a goddess go,
My mistress, when she walks, treads on the ground:
 And yet, by heaven, I think my love as rare
 As any she belied with false compare.

CXXXI

Thou art as tyrannous, so as thou art,
As those whose beauties proudly make them cruel;
For well thou know'st to my dear dotting heart
Thou art the fairest and most precious jewel.
Yet, in good faith, some say that thee behold,
Thy face hath not the power to make love groan:
To say they err I dare not be so bold,
Although I swear it to myself alone.
And to be sure that is not false I swear,
A thousand groans, but thinking on thy face, 10
One on another's neck, do witness bear
Thy black is fairest in my judgement's place.

9-10 *I love to hear . . . pleasing sound*] Cf. Constable's *Miscellaneous Sonnets*, No. v: "And from thy lips and breast sweet tunes do come."

11-12 *I grant . . . on the ground*] Cf. Lodge's *Phyllis*, viii: "No Nymph is she but mistress of the air." "Go" means "walk." Cf. li, 14.

14 *she*] here a substantive. Cf. *Tw. Night*, I, v, 226: "you are the cruell'st *she* alive."

CXXXI, 1, *so as thou art*] "as" here is an enclitic of emphasis.

11 *One on another's neck*] Cf. *1 Hen. IV*, IV, iii, 92: "in the neck of that," a common phrase. See also *Hamlet*, IV, vii, 164: "One woe doth tread upon another's heel."

SONNETS

In nothing art thou black save in thy deeds,
And thence this slander, as I think, proceeds.

CXXXII

Thine eyes I love, and they, as pitying me,
Knowing thy heart torments me with disdain,
Have put on black and loving mourners be,
Looking with pretty ruth upon my pain.
And truly not the morning sun of heaven
Better becomes the grey cheeks of the east,
Nor that full star that ushers in the even
Doth half that glory to the sober west,
As those two mourning eyes become thy face:
O, let it then as well beseem thy heart
To mourn for me, since mourning doth thee grace,
And suit thy pity like in every part.
Then will I swear beauty herself is black,
And all they foul that thy complexion lack.

10

CXXXIII

Beshrew that heart that makes my heart to groan
For that deep wound it gives my friend and me!

14 *this slander*] the allegation of the inability of the lady's "face" to "make love groan" (line 6, *supra*).

CXXXII, 3 *black and loving mourners be*] See CXXVII, 13, and note.

6 *the grey cheeks of the east*] Cf. *Tit. Andr.*, II, ii, 1: "the morn is bright and grey," and *2 Hen. IV*, II, iii, 18-19: "the sun In the grey vault of heaven."

9 *As those two mourning eyes become thy face*] For the image, cf. *T. of Shrew*, IV, v, 31-32: "What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty, *As those two eyes become thy heavenly face?*"

CXXXIII For the subject-matter of this and the next sonnet (the intrigue of the poet's friend with his mistress), see note on xl, *supra*.

SONNETS

Is 't not enough to torture me alone,
But slave to slavery my sweet'st friend must be?
Me from myself thy cruel eye hath taken,
And my next self thou harder hast engrossed:
Of him, myself, and thee, I am forsaken;
A torment thrice threefold thus to be crossed.
Prison my heart in thy steel bosom's ward,
But then my friend's heart let my poor heart bail; 10
Whoe'er keeps me, let my heart be his guard;
Thou canst not then use rigour in my gaol:
 And yet thou wilt; for I, being pent in thee,
 Perforce am thine, and all that is in me.

CXXXIV

So, now I have confess'd that he is thine
And I myself am mortgaged to thy will,
Myself I'll forfeit, so that other mine
Thou wilt restore, to be my comfort still:

9 *Prison my heart . . . ward*] Cf. xxii, 6-7, and cix, 3-4, and note. So Barnes' *Parthenophil*, xvi: "*mine heart* in her body lies *imprisoned*."

cxxxiv The legal terminology in this sonnet (cf. lxxxvii, 3-4) again closely resembles that employed by Barnes in his *Parthenophil*, Sonnets viii, ix, and xi, where "mortgage," "bail," "forfeit," "forfeiture," "deed of gift" are all applied to the mistress' hold on the lover's heart. This sort of phraseology, applied to amorous purposes, was well satirised by Sir John Davies in his *Gullinge Sonnets*, of which No. vii opens: "Into the midle temple of my harte"; and No. viii: "My case is this, I love Zepheria bright" (Davies' Works, ed. Grosart, ii, 61-62).

2 *thy will*] printed thus in the Quarto. See lvii, 13, and cxxxv, 1, and note.

3 *other mine*] my "alter ego."

SONNETS

But thou wilt not, nor he will not be free,
For thou art covetous and he is kind;
He learn'd but surety-like to write for me,
Under that bond that him as fast doth bind.
The statute of thy beauty thou wilt take,
Thou usurer, that put'st forth all to use, 10
And sue a friend came debtor for my sake;
So him I lose through my unkind abuse.
 Him have I lost; thou hast both him and me:
 He pays the whole, and yet am I not free.

CXXXV

Whoever hath her wish, thou hast thy *Will*,
And *Will* to boot, and *Will* in overplus;
More than enough am I that vex thee still,
To thy sweet will making addition thus.
Wilt thou, whose will is large and spacious,
Not once vouchsafe to hide my will in thine?
Shall will in others seem right gracious,
And in my will no fair acceptance shine?

7-8 *He learn'd . . . doth bind*] See note on *Merch. of Ven.*, I, ii, 73:

“the Frenchman became his surety and sealed *under* for another.”

9 *The statute of thy beauty*] The statutory security for thy beauty.

11 *a friend came*] a friend who became.

12 *my unkind abuse*] the unkind way in which I have been deluded.

CXXXV, 1 *Whoever hath her wish . . . Will*] In this and the next sonnet the word “will” occurs seventeen times, and in nine places it is in the original Quarto italicised and printed with a capital, thus: *Will*. (In this regard the typography of the Quarto is followed in the present text.) The capital letter and the italics suggest that a pun on the poet's Christian name is here intended, although *Will*

SONNETS

The sea, all water, yet receives rain still,
And in abundance addeth to his store;

10

is so often printed thus in Elizabethan books that the typography gives no sure ground for the deduction. Cf. John Davies' *Summa Totalis* (1607), where in the last twenty-six stanzas the substantive "Will" is used thirty times; it is italicised with the initial capital twelve times, and has the initial capital without the italics sixteen times; such are mere typographical vagaries. Apart from its usage as a proper name the word was especially common in the senses of self-will and lust, as well as in those of wish, caprice, goodwill, deliberate purpose, and testament. Its variety of significations encouraged verbal quibbles, and Shakespeare's plays abound in them, though nowhere does he bring his own Christian name under contribution. Cf. *L. L. L.*, II i, 98-99; and *Merch. of Ven.*, I, ii, 21-22, and note; *M. Wives*, III, iv, 58; *Two Gent.*, I, iii, 63, IV, ii, 88-89; *Much Ado*, V, iv, 26. Here the quibbling mainly revolves about the word in the sensual significance of "lust" and its colloquial employment as the poet's Christian name. See Lee's *Life of Shakespeare*, Appendix viii ("The Will Sonnets"). There is small ground for assuming that any reference is anywhere made to a second lover of the lady bearing the poet's own Christian name. In lvii, 13, the substantives "Will," and cxxi, 8, the plural form "Wills" are used without quibbling significance.

Whoever . . . Will] An allusion to the current cant phrase, which was utilised as the name of a popular comedy by William Haughton, c. 1597: "A woman will have her will."

9-10 *The sea, all water . . . to his store*] A favourite reflection of Shakespeare. Cf. *3 Hen. VI*, V, iv, 8-9:

"With tearful eyes add water to the sea,
And give more strength to that which hath too much";

Tw. Night, I, i, 10-11 (an apostrophe to the spirit of love): "thy capacity . . . receiveth as the sea"; *As you like it*, II, i, 46-49; and *Lover's Compl.*, 39-40.

SONNETS

So thou, being rich in *Will*, add to thy *Will*
One will of mine, to make thy large *Will* more.
Let no unkind, no fair beseechers kill;
Think all but one, and me in that one *Will*.

CXXXVI

If thy soul check thee that I come so near,
Swear to thy blind soul that I was thy *Will*,
And will, thy soul knows, is admitted there;
Thus far for love, my love-suit, sweet, fulfil.
Will will fulfil the treasure of thy love,
Ay, fill it full with wills, and my will one.
In things of great receipt with ease we prove
Among a number one is reckon'd none:

11-14 *So thou, being rich . . . one Will*] The lady being rich in *will* (*i. e.*,
obduracy and lustfulness) is bidden increase the abundant store by
granting the wish or will of her present lover: "Let not my mistress,"
the poet concludes, "kill in her unkindness any of her fair spoken
suitors. Rather let her think all who beseech her favours incorporate
in one alone of her lovers — and that one the writer whose name of
'Will' is a synonym for the passions that dominate her."

CXXXVI, 2 *thy blind soul*] Cf. xxvii, 10, *supra*: "The *sightless view* of the
soul."

3 *And will . . . is admitted there*] Cf. Sir John Davies' *Nosce Teipsum*
(Works, ed. Grosart, ii, p. 79): "*Will* holds the royal sceptre in the
soul."

6 *wills*] the varied forms of will, *i. e.*, lusts, stubbornness, etc. The
plural form is common. Cf. Barnes' *Parthenophil*: "Mine heart bound
martyr to thy *wills*," and cxxi, 8, *supra*.

8 *one is reckon'd none*] a quibble on the proverbial expression "one is no
number," which is twice repeated in Marlowe and Chapman's *Hero*
and Leander, Sestiad I, 255 and Sestiad V, 339, and is again quoted in
Rom. and Jul., I, ii, 32-33. See note there. Cf. also viii, 14, *supra*.

SONNETS

As testy sick men, when their deaths be near,
No news but health from their physicians know;
For, if I should despair, I should grow mad,
And in my madness might speak ill of thee: 10
Now this ill-wresting world is grown so bad,
Mad slanderers by mad ears believed be.
That I may not be so, nor thou belied,
Bear thine eyes straight, though thy proud heart go
wide.

CXLI

In faith, I do not love thee with mine eyes,
For they in thee a thousand errors note;
But 't is my heart that loves what they despise,
Who, in despite of view, is pleased to dote;
Nor are mine ears with thy tongue's tune delighted;
Nor tender feeling, to base touches prone,
Nor taste, nor smell, desire to be invited
To any sensual feast with thee alone:
But my five wits nor my five senses can 10
Dissuade one foolish heart from serving thee,
Who leaves unsway'd the likeness of a man,
Thy proud heart's slave and vassal wretch to be:

11 *ill-wresting*] misinterpreting maliciously.

14 *Bear thine eyes . . . wide*] Cf. xciii, 4, *supra*: "Thy looks with me, thy heart in other place."

CXLI, 6 *base touches*] sensual indulgence.

9 *five wits*] The wits or intellectual faculties were reckoned of the same number as the "senses." Cf. *Much Ado*, I, i, 55, and note.

11-12 *Who leaves unsway'd . . . wretch to be*] (One foolish heart) which, foregoing its control, makes of a man the mere husk or simulacrum

SONNETS

Only my plague thus far I count my gain,
That she that makes me sin awards me pain.

CXLII

Love is my sin, and thy dear virtue hate,
Hate of my sin, grounded on sinful loving:
O, but with mine compare thou thine own state,
And thou shalt find it merits not reproving;
Or, if it do, not from those lips of thine,
That have profaned their scarlet ornaments
And seal'd false bonds of love as oft as mine,
Robb'd others' beds' revenues of their rents.
Be it lawful I love thee, as thou lovest those
Whom thine eyes woo as mine importune thee: 10
Root pity in thy heart, that, when it grows,
Thy pity may deserve to pitied be.

of a human being, thereby suffering him to become thy proud heart's slave and wretched vassal.

CXLII, 6 *their scarlet ornaments*] Cf. *Edward III*, II, i, 10: "His cheeks put on *their scarlet ornament*." So Constable's *Diana*, Decade iv, Sonnet vi: "Your lips *in scarlet clad*."

7 *seal'd false bonds of love*] Cf. *Merch. of Ven.*, II, vi, 6: "To *seal love's bonds*" (*i. e.*, to kiss). So *Venus and Adonis*, 511-516: "sweet *seals* in my soft lips imprinted . . . thy *seal*-manual on my wax-red lips"; and *Meas. for Meas.*, IV, i, 5-6: "my kisses . . . *Seals of love* but seal'd in vain."

8 *Robb'd others' . . . rents*] Sought intercourse with married men. Cf. Daniel's *Complaint of Rosamond* (1592), 755-756: "And in uncleanness ever have been fed By *the revenue of a wanton bed*," and *Lucrece*, 1619-1620: "Dear husband, in the *interest of thy bed* A stranger came."

SONNETS

If thou dost seek to have what thou dost hide,
By self-example mayst thou be denied!

CXLIII

Lo, as a careful housewife runs to catch
One of her feather'd creatures broke away,
Sets down her babe, and makes all swift dispatch
In pursuit of the thing she would have stay;
Whilst her neglected child holds her in chase,
Cries to catch her whose busy care is bent
To follow that which flies before her face,
Not prizing her poor infant's discontent:
So runn'st thou after that which flies from thee,
Whilst I thy babe chase thee afar behind; 10
But if thou catch thy hope, turn back to me,
And play the mother's part, kiss me, be kind:
So will I pray that thou mayst have thy *Will*,
If thou turn back and my loud crying still.

13 *If thou . . . dost hide*] If thou then wouldst have of me that love which thou now hidest away from me, which thou now declinest to give me.

CXLIII, 3 *Sets down her babe*] For the imagery cf. xxii, 11-12, *supra*, where the poet promises to bear and keep his beloved's heart "so chary As tender nurse *her babe* from faring ill."

13 *Will*] This word is italicised with a capital letter in the Quarto, and a pun is commonly detected as in *Sonnets* cxxxv and cxxxvi, *supra*. "Thou mayst have thy *Will*" is a variant on the current catch-phrase "A woman will have her will" already employed, cxxxv, 1, *supra*, and then again seems to be the pun on the poet's Christian name. The moral of the sonnet is somewhat equivocal. The poet presents his mistress as a country housewife, who sets down himself, "her babe," to catch a "feather'd creature" who

SONNETS

CXLIV

Two loves I have of comfort and despair,
Which like two spirits do suggest me still:
The better angel is a man right fair,
The worser spirit a woman colour'd ill.
To win me soon to hell, my female evil
Tempteth my better angel from my side,
And would corrupt my saint to be a devil,
Wooing his purity with her foul pride.
And whether that my angel be turn'd fiend
Suspect I may, yet not directly tell;

10

flies out of her poultry-yard. The poet so far from regarding the escaping thing as a serious rival wishes the woman success in the chase on condition that she will then come back and kiss his tears away. There is some suggestion of a "menage à trois"; see xl, *supra*, and note. But doubt is permissible whether the "feather'd creature" could portend real danger to the good relations of the woman and her "babe."

CXLIV This sonnet is the second poem in *Pass. Pilg.* of 1599, with some slight textual variations there noted. For the conflict between the poet's affection for friend and mistress see xl, *supra*, and note, and cf. xlii, xliii, cxxxii, and cxxxiii.

2 *suggest*] tempt.

6 *Tempteth . . . from my side*] Cf. *Othello*, V, ii, 211: "Yea, curse his better angel from his side," and Drayton's *Idea* (1599), Sonnet xxii:

"An evil spirit, your beauty, haunts me still . . .
Which ceaseth not to tempt me to each ill; . . .
Thus am I still provok'd to every evil
By that good-wicked spirit, sweet angel-devil."

Mark Antony calls Brutus "Cæsar's angel" (*Jul. Cæs.*, III, ii, 181). *side*] Thus *Pass. Pilg.* The 1609 Quarto reads wrongly *sight*.

9 *And whether . . . fiend*] Cf. Jodelle's *Contr' Amours*, Sonnet vi, "Faisant d'un diable un ange."

SONNETS

But being both from me, both to each friend,
I guess one angel in another's hell:
 Yet this shall I ne'er know, but live in doubt,
 Till my bad angel fire my good one out.

CXLV

Those lips that Love's own hand did make
Breathed forth the sound that said "I hate,"
To me that languish'd for her sake:
But when she saw my woeful state,
Straight in her heart did mercy come,
Chiding that tongue that ever sweet
Was used in giving gentle doom;
And taught it thus anew to greet;
"I hate" she alter'd with an end,
That follow'd it as gentle day
Doth follow night, who, like a fiend,
From heaven to hell is flown away;
 "I hate" from hate away she threw,
 And saved my life, saying "not you."

14 *fire . . . out*] The expression which had a literary character in Shakespeare's day is now a vulgarism. So Guilpin's *Skialetheia* (1598, ed. Grosart, p. 17): "But Ile be loth (wench) to be *fired out*." See *Lear*, V, iii, 23, and note. Cf. *Athenæum*, January 19, 1901.

CXLV This sonnet is in octosyllabics, like Lyly's familiar song "Cupid and my Campaspe played," which is also in fourteen lines but, unlike the present poem, is in couplets. The temper of the two poems is similar.

11-12 *night, who . . . is flown away*] Cf. *Lucrece*, 1081-1082: "*solemn night* with slow sad gait descended *To ugly hell*."

13-14 "I hate" . . . "not you"] She deprived the words "I hate" of the

SONNETS

CXLVI

Poor soul, the centre of my sinful earth,
. . . these rebel powers that thee array,
Why dost thou pine within and suffer dearth,
Painting thy outward walls so costly gay?
Why so large cost, having so short a lease,
Dost thou upon thy fading mansion spend?
Shall worms, inheritors of this excess,
Eat up thy charge? is this thy body's end?
Then, soul, live thou upon thy servant's loss,
And let that pine to aggravate thy store;
Buy terms divine in selling hours of dross;
Within be fed, without be rich no more:

10

tragic consequence of hate by adding the words "not you." A like quibble in which the negative particle "not" is employed to identical purpose is in *Lucrece*, lines 1534-1540.

CXLVI, 1-2 *Poor soul . . . array*] There is an obvious corruption here. The Quarto repeats by a typographical error at the beginning of the second line *My sinful earth* from the end of the first line. Malone's suggestion of *Fool'd by those rebel powers*, etc., seems as good as any. "Array" is occasionally found in the sense of "afflict" or "torment," which would suit the context. But the ordinary meaning of "clothe" or "adorn" seems alone consistent with the "costly gay" ornament in which, according to line 4, the powers of sin have invested the soul's external home. Cf. for the relation between the soul and the body *Rom. and Jul.*, II, i, 1-2: "Can I go forward when my heart is here? Turn back, dull *earth*, and find thy *centre* out." See also *Merch. of Ven.*, V, i, 64-66: "Such harmony is in immortal *souls*; But whilst this *muddy* vesture of decay Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

10 *aggravate*] increase.

11 *Buy terms divine . . . of dross*] Buy long periods of divine salvation

SONNETS

So shalt thou feed on Death, that feeds on men,
And Death once dead, there 's no more dying then.

CXLVII

My love is as a fever, longing still
For that which longer nurseth the disease;
Feeding on that which doth preserve the ill,
The uncertain sickly appetite to please.
My reason, the physician to my love,
Angry that his prescriptions are not kept,
Hath left me, and I desperate now approve
Desire is death, which physic did except.
Past cure I am, now reason is past care,
And frantic-mad with evermore unrest; 10
My thoughts and my discourse as madmen's are,
At random from the truth vainly express'd;
For I have sworn thee fair, and thought thee
bright,
Who art as black as hell, as dark as night.

-
- by disposing of all hours wasted in sensual indulgence. Cf. Ovid's *Metam.*, xv (Golding's transl., 1612, p. 185 b): "filthy drosse of earth."
CXLVII, 5 *My reason, the physician to my love*] Cf. *M. Wives*, II, i, 5: "though Love use Reason for his physician, he admits him not for his counsellor."
7-8 *I desperate now . . . did except*] My desperate case proves that love, which took exception to the physic of reason, is death.
9 *Past cure . . . past care*] This common proverb is quoted in *L. L. L.*, V, ii, 28.
10-11 *And frantic-mad . . . as madmen's are*] Cf. Drayton's *Idea*, 1594, No. xliii: "But still distracted in Love's lunacy, And Bedlam-like thus raving in my grief. Now rail upon her hair," etc.
14 *Who art as black as hell . . . night*] Cf. cxxvii, *supra*, and notes.

SONNETS

CXLVIII

O me, what eyes hath Love put in my head,
Which have no correspondence with true sight!
Or, if they have, where is my judgement fled,
That censures falsely what they see aright?
If that be fair whereon my false eyes dote,
What means the world to say it is not so?
If it be not, then love doth well denote
Love's eye is not so true as all men's: no,
How can it? O, how can Love's eye be true,
That is so vex'd with watching and with tears? 10
No marvel then, though I mistake my view;
The sun itself sees not till heaven clears.
O cunning Love! with tears thou keep'st me blind,
Lest eyes well-seeing thy foul faults should find.

CXLIX

Canst thou, O cruel! say I love thee not,
When I against myself with thee partake?
Do I not think on thee, when I forgot
Am of myself, all tyrant, for thy sake?

CXLVIII, 4 *censures*] judges.

8 *Love's eye . . . no.*] No particular sanctity attaches to this perplexing punctuation of the Quarto. The colon looks like a typographical superfluity and may well take the place of the comma after *no*. A pun on "eye" and "aye," the affirmative particle, seems obviously intended.

CXLIX, 2 *When I . . . partake*] Cf. xlix, 11 and lxxxviii, 3, *supra*. "Partake" means "take part." See *1 Hen. VI*, II, iv, 100: "Your *partaker* [*i. e.*, partisan] Pole."

3-4 *when I forgot . . . for thy sake*] when I forgot that I have interests of my own, in my zeal for thee, complete tyrant that thou art.

SONNETS

Who hateth thee that I do call my friend?
On whom frown'st thou that I do fawn upon?
Nay, if thou lour'st on me, do I not spend
Revenge upon myself with present moan?
What merit do I in myself respect,
That is so proud thy service to despise, 10
When all my best doth worship thy defect,
Commanded by the motion of thine eyes?
But, love, hate on, for now I know thy mind;
Those that can see thou lovest, and I am blind.

CL

O, from what power hast thou this powerful might
With insufficiency my heart to sway?
To make me give the lie to my true sight,
And swear that brightness doth not grace the day?
Whence hast thou this becoming of things ill,
That in the very refuse of thy deeds
There is such strength and warrantise of skill,
That, in my mind, thy worst all best exceeds?

CL For this vituperative sonnet, cf. cxxxvii, *supra*.

2 *With insufficiency*] By dint of defect.

5 *this becoming of things ill*] this grace of rendering seemly evil things.

See *Ant. and Cleop.*, I, iii, 96: "my becomings," *i. e.*, things that become me, my graces. At cxxvii, 13: "*becoming* of [*i. e.*, gracing] their woe," a like significance attaches to the verb "become." For the general sentiment cf. xl, 13, *supra*: "Lascivious *grace*, in whom *all ill well shows*"; and xcv, 12; also *Ant. and Cleop.*, II, ii, 242-243: "vilest things *Become* themselves in her."

7 *warrantise*] warranty, warrant.

SONNETS

Who taught thee how to make me love thee more,
The more I hear and see just cause of hate? 10
O, though I love what others do abhor,
With others thou shouldst not abhor my state:
 If thy unworthiness raised love in me,
 More worthy I to be beloved of thee.

CLI

Love is too young to know what conscience is;
Yet who knows not conscience is born of love?
Then, gentle cheater, urge not my amiss,
Lest guilty of my faults thy sweet self prove:
For, thou betraying me, I do betray
My nobler part to my gross body's treason;
My soul doth tell my body that he may
Triumph in love; flesh stays no farther reason,
But rising at thy name doth point out thee 10
As his triumphant prize. Proud of this pride,
He is contented thy poor drudge to be,
To stand in thy affairs, fall by thy side.
 No want of conscience hold it that I call
 Her "love" for whose dear love I rise and fall.

CLII

In loving thee thou know'st I am forsworn,
But thou art twice forsworn, to me love swearing;
In act thy bed-vow broke, and new faith torn,
In vowing new hate after new love bearing.

CLI, 3 *my amiss*] my fault; cf. xxxv, 7, *supra*.

CLII, 2 *twice forsworn*] The lady has not only played the poet false, but her husband as well.

SONNETS

But why of two oaths' breach do I accuse thee,
When I break twenty? I am perjured most;
For all my vows are oaths but to misuse thee,
And all my honest faith in thee is lost:
For I have sworn deep oaths of thy deep kindness,
Oaths of thy love, thy truth, thy constancy;
And, to enlighten thee, gave eyes to blindness,
Or made them swear against the thing they see;
For I have sworn thee fair; more perjured I,
To swear against the truth so foul a lie!

10

CLIII

Cupid laid by his brand and fell asleep:
A maid of Dian's this advantage found,
And his love-kindling fire did quickly steep
In a cold valley-fountain of that ground;
Which borrow'd from this holy fire of Love
A dateless lively heat, still to endure,

11 *to enlighten thee . . . to blindness*] in order to invest thee with light and beauty, sacrifices my powers of vision. I deliberately shut my eyes, so that I might think thy ugliness beauty.

CLIII This poem, like the one that follows, adapts an epigram in the Palatine Anthology, ix, 627, which was translated into Latin in *Selecta Epigrammata*, Basle, 1529. The Greek lines relate how Cupid while asleep gave his torch to the keeping of nymphs, who, thinking to put out its fire, plunged it into the water with the result that it heated the water for all time. The conceit is very common in Renaissance poetry. The poet's attribution of permanent curative properties to the fountain fired by Cupid's torch is a late amplification of the Greek epigram. Cf. Fletcher's *Licia* (1593), xxvii, 11-12: "Now by her [*i. e.*, Love's] means it [*i. e.*, the water] purchased hath that bliss Which all diseases quickly can remove." Cf. cliv, 11-12, *infra*.

6 *dateless*] endless, lasting; cf. xxx, 6.

SONNETS

And grew a seething bath, which yet men prove
Against strange maladies a sovereign cure.
But at my mistress' eye Love's brand new-fired,
The boy for trial needs would touch my breast; 10
I, sick withal, the help of bath desired,
And thither hied, a sad distemper'd guest,
 But found no cure: the bath for my help lies
 Where Cupid got new fire, my mistress' eyes.

CLIV

The little Love-god lying once asleep
Laid by his side his heart-inflaming brand,
Whilst many nymphs that vow'd chaste life to keep
Came tripping by; but in her maiden hand
The fairest votary took up that fire
Which many legions of true hearts had warm'd;
And so the general of hot desire
Was sleeping by a virgin hand disarm'd.
This brand she quenched in a cool well by,
Which from Love's fire took heat perpetual, 10
Growing a bath and healthful remedy
For men diseased; but I, my mistress' thrall,
 Came there for cure, and this by that I prove,
 Love's fire heats water, water cools not love.

8 *Against . . . a sovereign cure*] Cf. *Venus and Adonis*, 916: "'Gainst
venomed sores the only *sovereign* plaster."

CLIV, 7 *general*] commander-in-chief.

11-12 *a bath . . . For men diseased*] Cf. cliii, 7-8, *supra*.

13 *this by that I prove*] I draw from such facts as I have given the
following conclusion.



4-2-4

1-1-4

